

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

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## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 1 of 30

by Jack Bates

Posted: Mon Apr 06, 2015 9:42 pm

**Moderator Comment, 29 April 2017:** This comment has been added by a CEFSG Moderator to the first post in this thread, as well as the first post in the related thread(s). There are now two (2) primary topics that relate to the Norm Christie investigation of what was historically related to CA40, a battlefield grave site associated with the assault on Vimy Ridge in April 1917. The initial 2015 topic "Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater", deals with Christie's initial suggestion that there were at least 40 men of the 16th Battalion left in an mass grave on the Vimy Battlefield, as highlighted in the TV show "The Missing". The second topic "New documentary - Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers", relates to the 2017 History Channel presentation on Christie's initial site investigation at his proposed sites for CA40 (History Channel Trailer). Today's search also revealed a 2015 orphaned post on the topic, which I have now closed and added a copy this notice: Norm Christie - Searching for Lost Soldiers of Vimy Ridge. A related topic contains links to CEFSG Unknown Projects that are based on work that was initially proposed by Norm Christie. That first post in that topic "Christie Case: Information and List of Reports", contains links to all of the cases, as well as all of the Christie videos that have been identified. For individual cases, just search for "Christie Case" in topic titles only or click on this link "All Christie Cases". The individual topics contain a large number of posts from individual CEFSG members, some in agreement with Norm Christie and some who believe there are other alternatives that were not included in the presentations. A formal submission was made to the CWGC on 1 March 2016 by a group of CEFSG researchers, suggesting an alternative CA40 site that agreed with the CWGC wording: "CA40: Report Submitted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission". To date, there is no proof from any individual or organization that the CWGC was incorrect when they stated *"The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917"* (see Nine Elms Military Cemetery).

Norm Christie has an article in the Ottawa citizen April 6th re 16th Bn discovery at Vimy Ridge...Well done Norm.....jack

### Re: Vimy Ridge

by ejwalshe

Posted: Tue Apr 07, 2015 5:12 pm

Historian finds 'missing' soldiers from the Battle of Vimy Ridge

[January 21, 2016](#)

This topic has expanded considerably since it was started by Jack back in April 2015. There were a number of replies in April and May 2015 and then the topic went dormant for for more than 7 months .... and then the detailed analysis of the case began in earnest.

The questions that surround this case are in themselves simple, but the answers are somewhat evasive and complex. Those investigating have "bounced around" a number of ideas and at times we have

switched back-and-forth between the feasible solutions. To make it easier for all of us using this topic, I (Richard) have edited Ted's post here to insert an index of the main topics, which we will update as we progress.

Before we begin, we should look at the main questions:

- Is there a crater at 51.b.A.10.c.9.7?
- Is this crater called "C.A. 40" (or CA40) to designate it as a burial ground of the 1st Canadian Division?
- Why does the CWGC say that CA40 is in a different location at *"274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track"*?
- Do we know exactly how many men of the 16th Battalion are missing from April 9, 1917?
- Is there any proof that any or all of these men are buried in the "A10" crater (we do not call it the "CA40 crater")?
- Are there other possible locations for the burial ground known as CA40?
- Do any of the other possible sites match the CWGC description related to the main road and light railway track?

Anyone reading this topic must do so with an open mind. Nobody is saying (*at least not as of this date*) that they have solved the problem. A number of us, but not all, are seriously questioning the statements that *"44 members of the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, who died playing a heroic part in the April 1917 Battle of Vimy Ridge may still be buried in a temporary grave in mine crater CA40"*. The CWGC does say that 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion were buried in CA40, but not at that location. That historic CWGC report, written long ago, may also have changed as some of the men were recovered. We will not know that answer until they are discovered. I believe we all agree there are a large number of men of the 16th Battalion missing (there certainly is a disproportionate number missing compared to the other battalion's in the 3rd Brigade), we do not know where they are at the moment, but we do have a duty to find them and provide them with a proper form of commemoration.

#### The Index of the Topic:

1. The option that the correct site is 51b.A.17.b.1.5 is first introduced. (link). It was meant to say 51b.A.11.d.7.6 but the gremlins got it first! Ted had identified this location by the wrong light rail.
2. The first count is made of the number of missing and it appears feasible that there are 40 or more men missing and on the Vimy Memorial (link).
3. Ted visits the site in April 25, 2015 and marks the A10 crater with a Canadian flag and he reports there is a depression in that area (link).
4. The topic is revisited in late December 2015 as Richard is planning a local fundraising for the recovery of Milton Soldier Private Baguley - funds that would go to the Norm Christie initiative, if it is shown to be correct (link).
5. The question is raised as to whether 51b.A10.c.9.7 is the location of the "crater" as the IWM trench maps show that to be a German trench (link).
6. The location of as many of the known burial sites is prepared and their locations are marked for future reference (link).
7. Robyn asks for the involvement of Norm Christie in the discussions (link).
8. Ted identifies the location of the burial ground for the men of the 14th Battalion, opening the discussion about *"what were the plans for recovery and burial of the dead"*? (link)
9. Richard looks at the question of whether there was any reported collection and burial of the men of the 16th Battalion from the A10 area to battlefield cemeteries - the answer was yes (link).
0. A minute-by-minute analysis is made of the documentary of the "Missing", a copy of which is inserted into the forum at this point. A number of questions are raised so as to peak the interest of the membership to review the film and provide comment (link).
1. A review of the war diaries reveals that the 13th Battalion is tasked with clearing the battlefield, including areas where the men of the 16th Battalion fell during the early morning to mid-afternoon of April 9, 1917 (link). The 14th Battalion would clear the area to the east of the 13th Battalion.



2. The analysis of the report of the finding of a "broken cross" with the names of men (it does not say how many) located at the A10 site - 4 bodies are recovered (link).
3. Richard prepares and presents his list of questions he feels need to be asked and perhaps answered, in order move forward on the project (link).
4. Bob posts the reference paper that describes the process for the clearing of the dead (link) The article refers specifically to the lessons learned in A10 and A11 on April 9, 1917.
5. The GRRF and COG-BR records are checked for all the surrounding cemeteries (the larger ones are not yet complete) and although it appears there are a large number of men potentially in Orchard Dump Cemetery, it turns out not to be the case - but it has to be proven for each cemetery (link).
6. VimyBoy enters the discussion and rattles us all awake! We were looking at trench maps at the time of the battle and prior to the battle (1916-1917) so with our blinders on we did not see that they built "light rail lines" after April 9, 1917 that appear in the 1918 trench maps (link).
7. Ted reveals where he intended to direct us to the burial area at the "light rail line" back at the start of the review. The correct area for his direction is 51b.A.11.d.7.6 and it fits all the criteria for the correct burial locations described in the war diaries and exactly as stated in the CWGC reports (link). Ted had the spot identified right from the start.
8. A possible refinement of the 51b.A.11.d.7.6 to 51b.A.11.d.8.8 puts the crosshairs right on the 300 yard (274 metre) mark and the light railway line referenced by the CWGC historical records (link).
9. Brad uncovers a previously unidentified aerial photograph of the Vimy Craters which enhances the ability to show that the 51b.A10.c.9.7 area is not a crater, perhaps instead a large trench or heavily shelled area (link)?
- !0. Richard's personal analysis of where he now stands on this project and what he believes needs to be done to go to the next stage - submitted for critique by all those involved (link).
- !1. Further updates will continue.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **Waggoner**

Posted: **Tue Apr 07, 2015 5:19 pm**

I am a bit confused. Has he actually found them or only thinks he knows where they are? If the latter, then there definately should be an excavation to find them!

All the best,

Gary

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **swellal**

Posted: **Tue Apr 07, 2015 5:42 pm**

**Waggoner wrote:**

there definately should be an excavation to find them!

The very first item on the agenda is permission to invade private property with heavy equipment. If he gets that, then the next item would be raising the funds to do the excavation. It would not be cheap. At the same time, he needs the cooperation of the CWGC and Veterans Affairs Canada.

It is not an easy project to bring to fruition.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Apr 07, 2015 9:47 pm**

I was a bit confused too for a while...but over the last week I became convinced once again that Norm Christie was right - the men must still lie deep in the crater at GRAVE CA 40.

Today, I am right back to being confused again!

Ottawa Citizen - April 6th ....now they are at Zivy Crater?

Toronto Star - April 4th ....and a couple of days before they were at GRAVE CA 40?

Ay Carumba!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Apr 08, 2015 7:42 am**

Zivy Crater is C.B.1

That means it was built by the "C" (Canadian Corps Burial Officer) of or for the "B" (2nd Division) and it was grave or cemetery "1".

Lichfield Crater is similarly "C.B.2A"

C.A.40 was a temporary grave that was incorporated into the Nine Elms Cemetery during the concentration process.

**CWGC wrote:**

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

Zivy Crater and Nine Elms cemetery are very close to each other.

**Any reference to Zivy Crater or C.B.1 is incorrect.** There are only two (2) men of the 16th Battalion buried there (Ptes. Bress & Cheesman). Most importantly, Zivy Crater Cemetery was not created by concentration of graves, it was and remains as a mass burial site. It contains 12 members of the 18th Battalion, 10 of the 25th Battalion, 11 of the 20th Battalion, 11 of the 21st Battalion, 1 of the 22nd Battalion, 3 of the 24th Battalion, and 1 each of the 26th and 31st Battalions. As you see those are all (except the 16th) part of the 2nd Canadian Division, thus the "B" in the name C.B.1.

C.A.40 was the correct reference and it belongs to "A" which is the 1st Division and the men of the 16th Battalion.

Perhaps what Norm Christie is referencing is that there are only 16 men listed on the CWGC records for being of the 16th Battalion and buried in Nine Elms Cemetery. There are according to Norm 539 Canadians in Nine Elms of which 99 are unknown. In my investigation into those at Nine Elms I found 2 Unknown Sergeants in 1.A.27 and 1.G.4 which are here in topic 12658. I did not count the number from the 16th Battalion.

They have taken down "The Missing" from the on-line broadcasts, proably because it is on TV again on April 13th. I still have it on my PVR so I can check exactly what Norm said. As I recall, he was talking about only a few missing men from the crater (C.A.40) that he thought were still deeper in the mud and that is all that he was after, not 44 men.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Apr 08, 2015 9:05 pm**

I watched the show again tonight "The Missing" and what a difference after having spent the last 3 months in the records. It was if I had never watched it before.

The major items:

1. Norm is only talking about CA40 and the 44 men that should have been in Nine Elms.
2. He believes that NONE of them were exhumed at that all 44 are below ground.
3. Norm used Zivy Crater as an example of how deep CA40 would be for excavation.
4. The area has not been cleared of explosives.

For Chris I did see his reference to the Sgt. Major and that I recall was when he was walking through Cabaret Rouge Cemetery, Souchez. I don't think I have marked anything there as of this date, as there were over 7,000 burials. I will look at that later.

The question of CB1 versus CA40 is answered.

**It is probably time we shared the information we now have with Norm Christie.** I can see why he had an issue with the CWGC as the records just don't match and many can be found. His work is different, in that he wants to excavate to find those that are not even concentrated.

For those that are following this topic, do take the time to watch the show again - even if you have already seen it before. An eye opener!

## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **robyn**

Posted: **Wed Apr 08, 2015 9:56 pm**

Deleted

## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Apr 09, 2015 9:53 am**

In this graphic I have placed a flower over every location from where bodies were brought in to Nine Elms Cemetery from the battlefield. This graphic certainly does give an appreciation of the task at hand - finding missing men of the 16th Battalion.

Two items of particular interest are those concerning GRAVE CA 40:

- CWGC burials reports describe location 51b.a.10.c.9.7 as being GRAVE CA 40 (this is the red-coloured fan wheel south of Zivy Crater).
- CWGC Nine Elms website describes GRAVE CA 40 as "...THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917." This area is the mauve coloured flower in the red diamond, situated directly under the A26/E15 today (Autoroute des Anglais). Note that location 51b.a.17.b.1.5 is directly referenced as a location of exhumed graves in the burial returns for Nine Elms Cemetery.

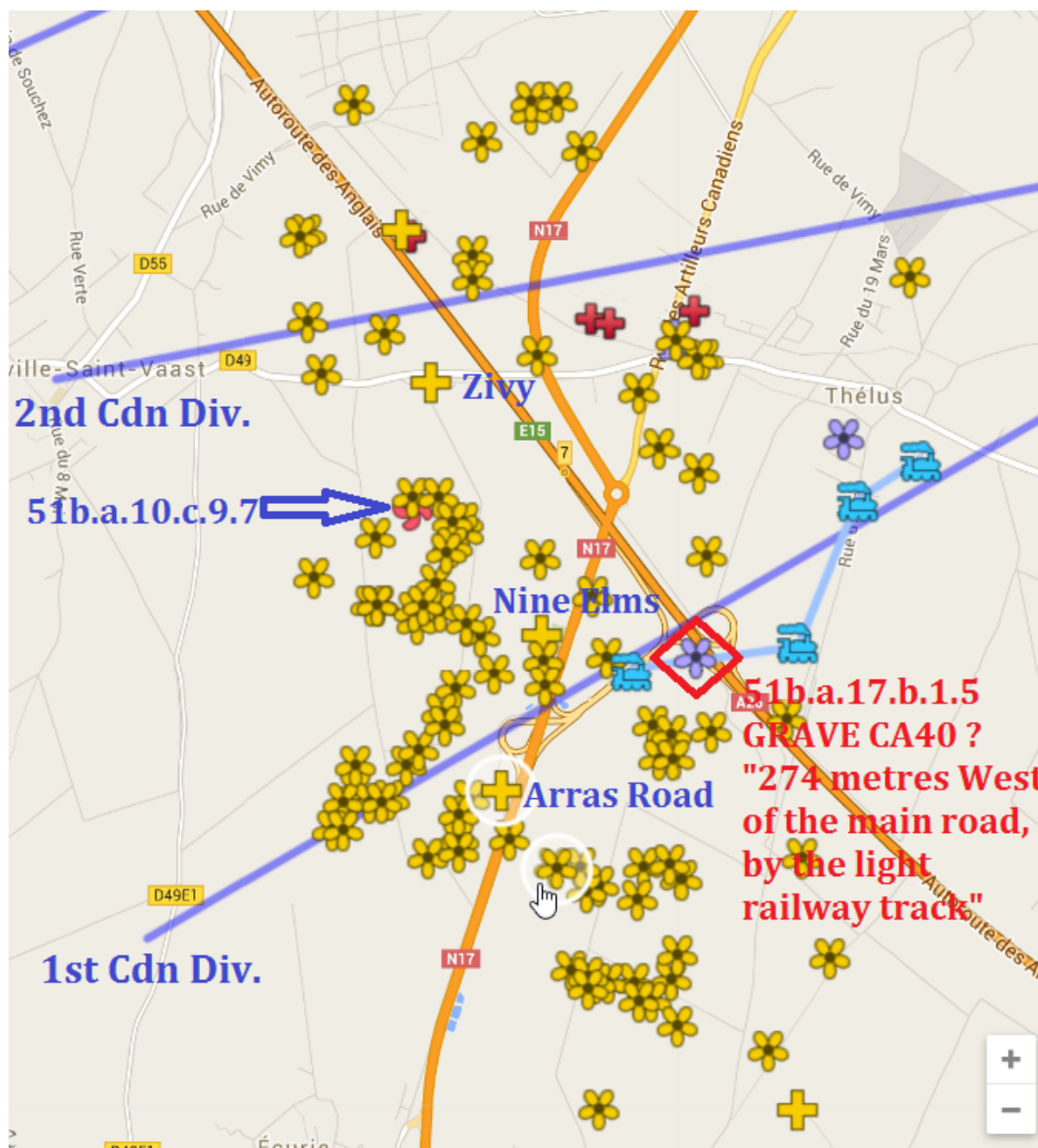
I determined this location by considering the former location of the light rail, and assuming that the "main road" is Rue d'Arras. With this assumption, 51b.a.17.b.1.5 is perfectly situated at 274 metres west of the main road by the light rail.

I am not sure when the road bed of A26 was constructed at this location, but we can be sure today there will never be an excavation approved at this spot, nor would there be a possibility of finding anything anyway - the excavation of the road bed would have been as deep as any crater of the time. And, I wonder if during that excavation of the road bed, were there unidentified bodies recovered? **Perhaps the missing men of the 16th Battalion have already been recovered!**

I have been troubled by the conflicting location of GRAVE CA 40. I do not understand where the CWGC Nine Elms description comes from, but the text itself appears to be 100 years old, as the light rail is referenced in the present tense.

Ask, me last week, or the week before, and I would give you a different reply...today, I am fairly evenly split between these two locations as the resting place of these missing men. Would I invest \$100,000 for a preliminary excavation at 51b.a.10.c.9.7? Last week, yes...today, no!

My heart says 51b.a.10.c.9.7 (the window of opportunity is still open), but my head is telling me 51b.a.176.b.1.5 (the window of opportunity has passed).



## Re: Vimy Ridge

by rlaughton

Posted: Thu Apr 09, 2015 11:59 am

I hope this helps in sorting out this puzzle. Caution with this as it appears I do not know which way is east versus west!

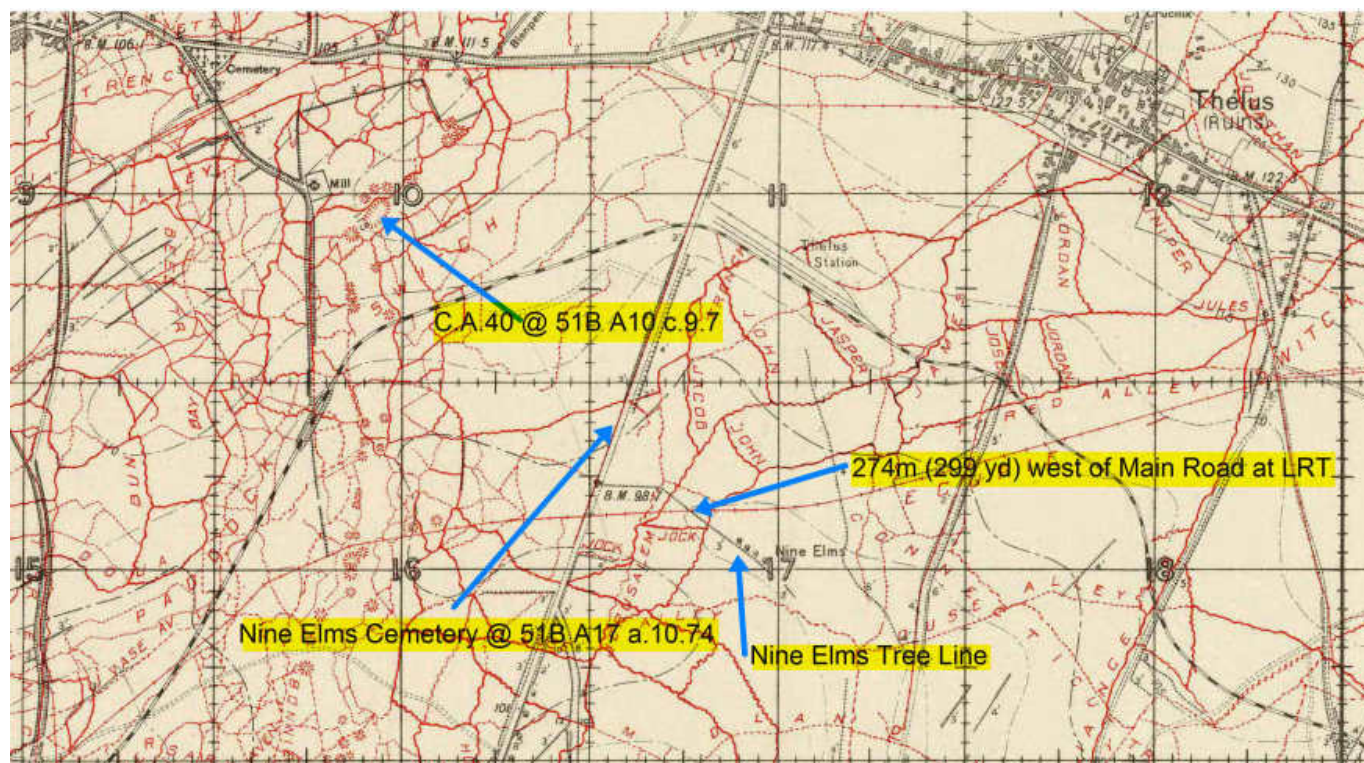


If you look at the trench map for August 1918 (long after the battle) it is very clear where the crater is located for **C.A.40 at 51B A10 c9.7**, as well as the location of the **CWGC Cemetery for Nine Elms at 51B A17 a10.75**. That differs as to the description of where the "Nine Elms" treeline was located and what the CWGC refers to as the location of C.A.40. It appears they confused the location of the source of the "Nine Elms" name with the location of the C.A.40 crater. It is clear that there is no crater anywhere in that location. There are a number of smaller craters in A16. That is a precise measure of the 274 m statement on the image.

I checked a number of other trench maps, prior to and post Vimy Ridge Battle, and the crater at C.A.40 does not appear until March 1917. The Zivy Group (craters) are evident in the fall of 1916 (about A10 b1.7), as is another set at Phillip Group (A10 b35.35) and to the southeast the large Visseg Group (A10 d8.8 to b1.1).

Now the question is, where was Norm Christie standing when he said he was on the depression at C.A.40? I think you can see where on the GE image that follows the trench map.

**Note 29-12-2015:** If you go forward it appears the big crater might be Visseg not CA40 at a.9.9. Also note that the CWGC reference as "west of the road" is west of the road heading into Thelus, which is to the east of the road where Nine Elms Cemetery is located, which goes into les Tilleuls. I was confused by that as on GE the Nine Elms is on the major road now but it probably was not in 1917. The CWGC descriptions appear to be circa 1917, as evidenced by the reference to the light railway track.



The current locations on Google Earth. The main reference point on here is the old communal cemetery just east of Neuville-Saint-Vaast, as it appears on the 1917 trench maps and the 2015 Google Earth image.

**Note:** These locations were not exact and they have been revised in a later post.



## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Apr 10, 2015 10:21 am**

Thanking Richard for the reminder...

Two upcoming opportunities to watch the previously aired *The Missing* by Norm Christie on TV.org....set your Video Recorders!

*Few Canadians know that 20,000 Canadian soldiers killed in the Great War are still missing. Some lie in unnamed graves others vanished on battlefields in France and Belgium. Norm Christie reveals why so many men disappeared. He solves a 90 year old mystery finding 44 men lost at the Battle of Vimy Ridge.*

The Missing  
Monday, April 13, 10:00 pm

The Missing  
Friday, April 17, 12:00 am

Also upcoming:

Sacred Places  
April 20, 2015

*Norm Christie takes us to the Western Front battlefields - where 'the real war is in the cemeteries' - to discover how these faraway, exquisitely designed and little visited burial grounds, with their thousands of Canadian dead, are truly our 'sacred places'.*

The Vimy Pilgrimage  
April 27, 2015

*Norm Christie reveals the extraordinary story of the largest peacetime armada in Canadian history -*

*the spectacular 1936 Vimy Pilgrimage to Europe - to honor the 60,000 dead of the Great War - and to unveil Canada's magnificent war memorial at Vimy Ridge*

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **robyn**

Posted: **Fri Apr 10, 2015 10:48 pm**

Deleted

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **Ken S.**

Posted: **Sat Apr 11, 2015 2:30 am**

I'm wondering if the arrow to CA40 in the Google Earth image is point to the same location as that on the trench map.

Appreciate the heads up on the re-broadcasts -- I only caught part of the show once and it will be good to see it in its entirety.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Apr 11, 2015 6:44 am**

**Ken S. wrote:**

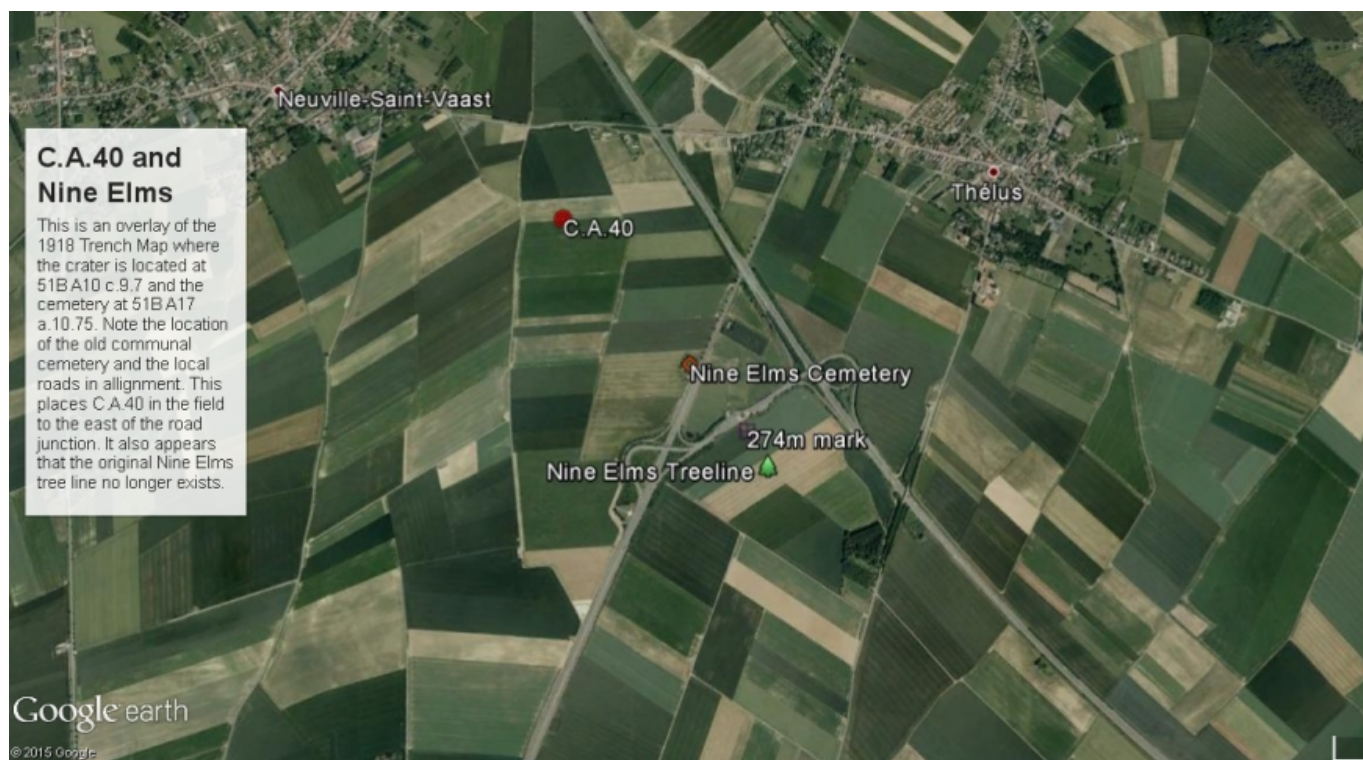
I'm wondering if the arrow to CA40 in the Google Earth image is point to the same location as that on the trench map?

No, not exactly as I did that as a quick reference. My tree line was out even further as apparently it is no longer there.

Below is the trench map in a Google Earth overlay with the additional markers, followed by a 2nd image in which I turned off the overlay transparency so you can see where the marks are without the trench map.

If you click on these images they should open in a larger scale within your browser or you can save them to your computer.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Apr 17, 2015 7:59 am**

I am looking for the precise reason why Norm believes that all the men of the 16th Bn. are still buried at CA 40. As I recall he said "the numbers don't add up". This is what is recorded for the cemetery:

Total Interred: 683

Total Named: 537

Total Unknown: 146

UCS: 99

UBS: 47

If there are 99 UCS (Unknown Canadian Soldiers) then could they not be the 40 men of the 16th Battalion that are missing? I have assembled a spreadsheet for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and it lists 16 men of the 16th Battalion by name, so I can check the COG-BR to see where they were exhumed (if not placed there directly). I have not completed that step as of yet.

It struck me that Norm must have gone through the COG-BR and checked to see who was exhumed from the CA40 location at 51B A10 c9.7. That I am now doing.

Okay, the tally is in and there are 462 graves listed on the COG-BR and Norm reported in his book that 80 original burials were made for the 14th Battalion men KIA April 9, 1917. That is a total of 542 but there are only 537 on the CWGC list so there is a difference of 5 bodies. Part of the error is that the CWGC lists only 74 men of the 14th Battalion as being in the cemetery, for a total of 536 graves (variation now = 1 and I probably miscounted by that number).

If you count all the graves found in the area of C40 (that is in sector A10) then there are 47 entries, which includes 3 British, 6 from the 60th Bn, plus the mixture of other units buried in and around what is also known as CA41. There were 146 men of the 16th Bn. KIA in April 1917 of which 3 were killed prior to the 9th and 37 after the 12th, with 106 KIA during the main part of the action from the 9th to 12th April. The only bodies recovered close to the site of CA40 at A10 c.9.7 were the 6 men of the 60th Battalion. There were only 9 others in sector A10c.

Taking a step back now for a moment, who says there were 40 men of the 16th Battalion buried in CA40? I have not seen that referenced anywhere, so better take a look. As a minimum to be missing they must be on the Vimy Memorial and there we find 63 men of the 16th listed for April 1917 of which 57 were KIA on April 9, 1917 - so there are enough missing to account for the 40 reported as being in CA40. There is nothing in the War Diary daily entries, other than on the 11th the revised numbers are 72 KIA, 7 DOW and 19 MIA for a total of 98 lost souls. There must have been 3 MIA found as the CWGC reports casualties at 95 men for April 9th. I checked the rest of the month in the war diary and there is no mention of the burial of 40 men at any location. **Would this have been in the Part II Daily Orders?**

I randomly checked some of the COD files for those listed on Vimy. Pte. Baguley for example was buried 1/2 mile SE NSV at 36C A10, as w c.9.7 as Lance Corporal Howie (that is CA40). Their cards all note that their graves were registered - the question is where? Has anyone seen that list? There was no record for Pte. Gorrie and I assume was the case for 45 men of the 16th in total. If no one has seen a list then it comes to checking the COD files for the 57 men lost on April 9th that are on the Vimy Memorial.

In the process of doing this review I also came across a reference to another CEF grave site labelled CA41, located at 51B A10 c3.2. It was not that far away.

You will see that reference in this COG-BR for graves 1.E.2 to 1.E.5:



REF. MAP 51b. 40000

# CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

## Burial Return.

D.G. 2  
RECEIVED  
23 MAY 1918  
1 helms  
54/16E NUM

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial... NINE ELMS.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	E	1	A 10 c 2.2.	YES	G.R.U. Canadian Corps 150154 Pte. B.H. Hudson 4th. Canadian Bn. Killed in Action between 9th. & 12th. April. 17 buried at this spot. @ A 24 France A 15b3.2.	NO
1	E	2	A 10 c 3.2.	YES	Canadian Corps. In memory of the undermentioned Soldiers who fell in Action 9th. April 1917 and are buried at this spot. @ A 41 France A 15 b 3.0. G.R.U.2. 3rd. Machine Gun Corps. 174256 Pte. J. Duffey. 429183 " A. Cameron. 420684 " M. A. Stanton. 488805 " G. Kensman.	NO
1	E	3	-do-			
1	E	4	-do-			
1	E	5	-do-			
1	G	13	A 17 b. 8.0.	NO	NIL	NO
1	G	14	-A 10 c 6.3.	YES	NIL	NO
1	G	15	A 10 c 1.2.	YES	G.R.U.2. Canadian Corps. Pte. Gallowader 7th. Canadian Bn. K. in A. Buried 10th. April. 1917. 51b A 15 b 8.2.	NO
1	G	16	A 10 c 89.00	YES	9487 Pte. Mews G.R.U.12. Canadian Regt.	NO
1	G	17	A 10 c 85.01	YES	NIL	NO

First Army Press, A.P. & S

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

And nearly on top of what is known as CA40 they found 6 identified Canadian Soldiers. Does that have any reference to why they think CA40 soldiers were recovered? That is at A10 c9.5 versus CA40 at A10 c9.7 so hard to distinguish that small separation.

REF MAP 51b 1/40000

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.**  
EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

NUMBER. 18.  
9/5/19.

**Burial Return.**

D.G.R. & E.  
RECEIVED  
23 MAY 1919

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial. NINE ELMS.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	E	11	A 10 a 2.8.	NO	NIL	NO
1	E	12	A 10 c 9.5.	YES	60th Canadian Infantry. Sacred to the Memory of Major S.L. Thorne. Lt. H.G. Punnett. 457329 Pte. W.F. Godbeer. 139515 " G. Brownlee. 201344 " H. Compton. 125898 " <del>Meir</del> Meir. Killed in Action Nov 26 1916. Buried at this spot. R.I.P.	NO
1	E	13				
1	E	14				
1	E	15				
1	E	16				
1	E	17				

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

First Army Press, A.P. & S.S.



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 2 of 30

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat May 09, 2015 10:17 am**

Grave CA 40 - visited on 25 April, 2015



There is a noticeable depression perhaps 20-30 meters wide...the flag is in the center of the depression.

No evidence of the metal stake which was planted last fall over a possible buried shell, as described in the documentary *The Missing*.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Tullybrone**

Posted: **Sat May 09, 2015 10:59 am**

Hi,

The Missing was shown on UK satellite channel (PBS America) in early April as part of 4 episode Great War series (unfortunately I missed the other 3!). I found it very interesting.

Norm Christie WW2 series For King & Country started last week on same satellite channel.

Regards

Steve Y

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **majorogilvie**

Posted: **Sat May 30, 2015 12:39 pm**

It was my understanding there were 16 bodies in crater 40 and Norm went to the Mayor and gained permission to dig there. They did check for bombs and found at least 1 several meters deep, too deep to dig by hand. The next step would be to bring in an excavator, but that would cost money. Norm never said how much money!

So the next step is to excavate, how much money could that cost? I don't recall Norm asking for donations!

A good excavator operator can dig 30 meters deep in less than an hour. I'm sure that a machine and operator wouldn't cost more than 100 euros an hour, so how much money does he need?

I'd be willing to donate some money and I'm sure almost everyone here that could, would do also.

All he has to do is ask!

Cheers,

Ian

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat May 30, 2015 2:26 pm**

I think it has to be a "historical / archaeological" dig and my wee brain is thinking I heard that he was hoping to raise \$100,000.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sun May 31, 2015 5:41 pm**

I believe he gained permission for a preliminary survey of the site, and in the first step they did discover one possible shell below the surface, as you mentioned...this is on film in one of the documentaries from Fall of 2014.

With ordnance in the area, I bet an experienced excavator in such situations is in no rush to blow himself up.

And when they do encounter something, they must call for help...bomb disposal expert Lt-Col Mike Watkins was killed in an accident at Vimy Ridge in 1998.

Nothing will proceed as quickly as we would hope.

I have no idea where they stand now, but after my visit to the site in late April 2015, the usual crop is already a couple of feet high.

I have heard a first hand account, also in April 2015 while I was in Europe, where he was offered a check for 100K, with the caveat the donor would be allowed to participate - I will allow you to surmise how that turned out.

And my brain also recalls in one of these documentaries or media posts, *his* project will not proceed without funding in the form of donations - the current policy of our Canadian government is not to fund any preliminary investigations.

DND/VAC must be convinced there are Canadian remains to be recovered before becoming involved and continuing the work.

Not an easy task.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Dec 28, 2015 9:05 am**

I am going back to take another look at this case, as it involves one of our Milton Soldiers (Private Fred Baguley). If I am to try and assist with raising money here in Milton I know I will have to be able to say that I am in 100% agreement with Norm Christie. At the moment, I am just not sure.

Two things first:

1. The \$110,000 to be raised is now clearly defined as the cost of the Ground Penetrating Radar to be used to examine the site non-intrusively; a documentary film crew (so another movie for Norm); compensation for the French farmers; and site security (that probably includes an explosives team).
2. I found a link to the YouTube version of the film clips so I have inserted it here for those that have not had the opportunity to see it on the TV.

This clip is a combination of the SUMMARY of his project followed by the extract from the TV version of MISSING.



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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Dec 28, 2015 11:14 am**

... continued post 28 December 2015 ... see above for start

This is a trench map similar to the one used in Norm's video where he talks about the 16th Battalion Canadian Scottish coming out of the Bentata Tunnel and crossing over to the German Front Line. I am not sure if the large crater that is the one at the point of the green arrow is the one where he makes reference to the deadly fire of the German machine guns, but I expect it is, as this is a March 1917 trench map prior to the battle.





In Volume 3 of "Sacred Places" (page 93) Norm makes this statement:

I had not noticed the reference to "Lieven" before and it is not listed in his references? Okay, I figured that out, that is a reference to the "Lieven Communal Cemetery Extension" which is on page 47-48 of the same book. Obviously there is some connection between the references at Nine Elms and Lieven but it is not explained, at least not that I can see? Here is the text from that page - does it make sense to you? What does it mean when he says "research shows that Owen was buried ..."? What was that research?

**Christie Vol 3 pg 48 Sacred Places wrote:**

In 1920 a broken cross was recovered from the Vimy battlefield. It stated, "In Memory of the Undermentioned Soldiers Who Fell in Action 9-4-17, and Are Buried at This Spot," and only one name could be discerned, Pte. R. Owen. Research shows Owen was buried with 43 other soldiers of the 16th Battn, CEF, in cemetery CA40. The cemetery was supposed to have been concentrated to Nine Elms but there is no indication of the burials in that cemetery. Only four UCS were recovered in 1920 from a collective grave that contained 44 men. All 44 men from CA40, including William Milne, VC, are commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, therefore missing. It is likely that the missing graves were over-looked and are still in the ground near Neuville-St. Vaast.

*(this is just an extract about the numbered battlefield graves)*

**CWGC Site wrote:****Historical Information**

"NINE ELMS" was the name given by the Army to a group of trees 460 metres East of the Arras-Lens main road, between Thelus and Roclincourt.

The cemetery was begun, after the capture of Vimy Ridge, by the burial in what is now Plot I, Row A of 80 men of the 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion, who fell on the 9th April 1917; and this and the next row were filled by June 1917. Three burials were made in Plot I, Row C, in July 1918. The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including:-

ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY, THELUS, on the roadside a little North of Nine Elms Cemetery. This graveyard, originally called "CA 39," contained the graves of 46 Canadian soldiers, 39 of whom belonged to the 15th Battalion, and most of whom fell on the 9th April 1917.

GRAVE CA 26, ROCLINCOURT, by the roadside a little South of Nine Elms Cemetery, in which were buried 72 Canadian soldiers of the 5th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

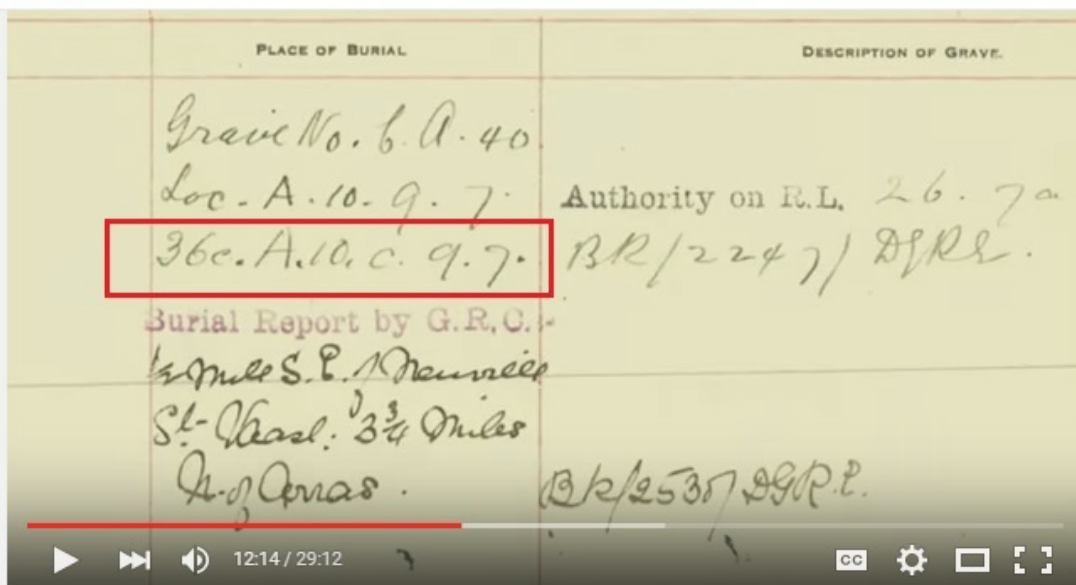
GRAVE CA 35, NEUVILLE-ST. VAAST, 914 metres West of Nine Elms Cemetery, in which were buried 23 Canadian soldiers of the 15th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

**GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.**

GRAVE CB 10, THELUS, 274 metres South-West of the hamlet of Les Tilleuls, in which were buried 52 Canadian soldiers and two from the United Kingdom who fell in April and May 1917.

GRAVE CC 3, VIMY, just South of the highest point of the Ridge, in which were buried 58 Canadian soldiers who fell on the 9th and 10th April 1917.

In the video, Norm explains that the Burial Officer would record the burial location with trench map grids, a point with which we can all agree. However if you watch the video closely, Norm says they recorded **CA40 as 51.A10.c.9.7** which is the location I put on the trench map above. Take a look at what the document actually says - **36c.A10.c.9.7** - and we know that Map 36c is the same as Map 44 which is the Lens map.



## Great War Tour Recover Our Vimy Heroes

One of the men that Norm says was buried in CA40 was one of my Milton Boys, Private Fred Baguley. This is the one that sent me back to this file as I had discovered this error in previous research. Here are Fred's COD and WGR cards and this is the note I had in the file:



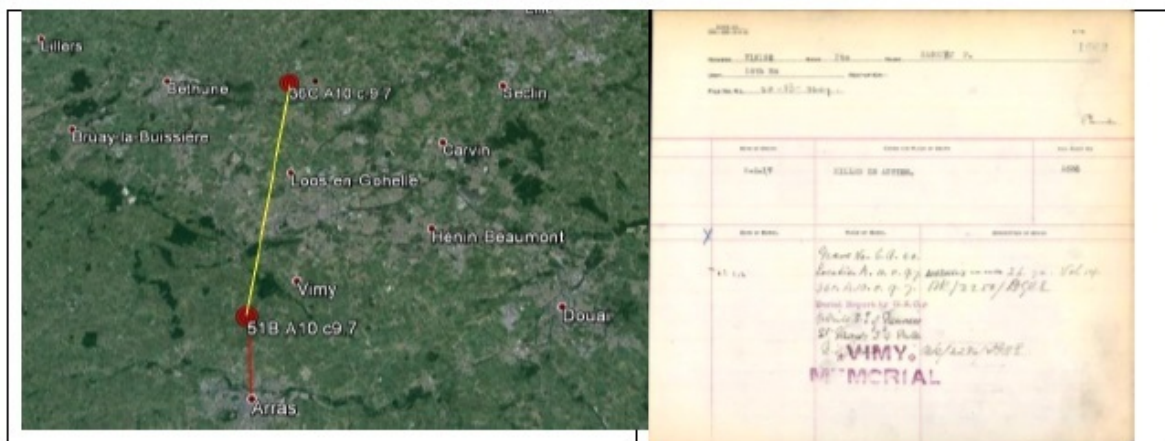
Just a caution about the map coordinates given on some of the Circumstance of Death cards.

I have been assembling all the cards for my Milton Soldiers Project and when I came to Private Frederick Baguley #718192 I found the surprise. Unfortunately it was not until after several hours had been wasted!

The COD reports he was buried at 36C.A.10 c9.7 in a registered grave. I wondered why he was not then in a cemetery database but rather on the Vimy Memorial? I guess they could not find him when they went back to exhume the body.

NO WONDER - they were in the wrong place, he was buried at 51B A10 c9.7. The description was 0.5 miles southeast of Neuville St. Vaast and 3.75 miles north of Arras. I should have read that part first but my first instinct was to look up the map coordinates, which on Google Earth looks like it is a small cemetery on the side of the Rue de Eglise just south of Violamies. My assumption at the start was that he had taken to a CCS to the north where he then died.

I am not sure now how they created these cards and it adds to the cautions that they are not all that accurate. As it turns out, they had the WRONG MAP. The location they give is on MAP 51B not 36C. A little typo error on both the CWGC and the CEF cards and his body is never exhumed. I am not sure which comes first, FORM E13 which I understand is the Canadian record or M.F.W. 2643 which I take to be the CWGC form.



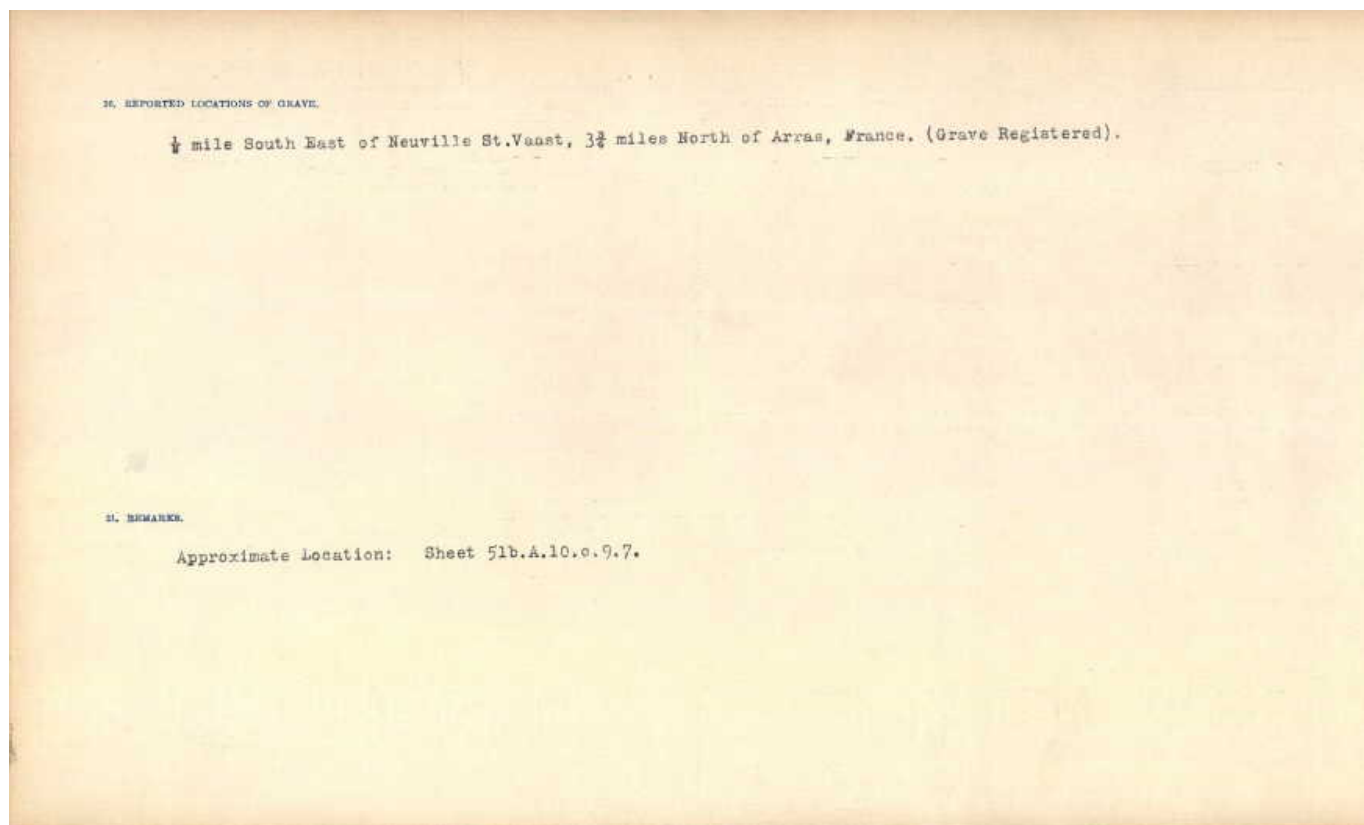
Is it perhaps just coincidence that Norm used one of the cards (which is different than Baguley one I used) that was wrong? I checked on Private William Johnstone Johnstone Milne, V.C. (mentioned in the show and book) and it appears his is correctly recorded as **51b.A10.c.9.7**, if that is what they meant. In actual fact it is wrong on the WGR and then it has been corrected on the COD second page. That means they corrected some of the records but not all. This is another confirmation that the WGR forms were completed PRIOR TO the COD files.

Here is a cropped part of his file.

FORM E13  
1054-10M-16-11-16.

NUMBER 427586 RANK Pte NAME MILNE W.J. (Victor)  
UNIT 16th Bn NEXT-OF-KIN Mr. David Milne auth #  
FILE NO. R.L. 25-M-4803 10. Anderson Street  
Cambristhan  
Scotland

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH		C
9-4-17	KILLED IN ACTION.		A.6
DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.	
X	Grave No. 6. A. 40 Loc. A. 10. 9. 7. 36c. A. 10. c. 9. 7. Burial Report by G. R. C. by Mr. S. P. K. D. M. St. Vlas. 3 3/4 miles H. of Anas.	Authority on R.L. 26. 7. BR/2247/ D/R.L. BR/25307 D/R.L.	



## 16. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

$\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles North of Arras, France. (Grave Registered).

## 17. REMARKS.

Approximate Location: Sheet 51b.A.10.c.9.7.

The only name that was readable on the cross that they found for CA 40 was that of Private Robert Owen #859684, also of the 16th Battalion. His WGR File is also incorrect and his COD card was corrected.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

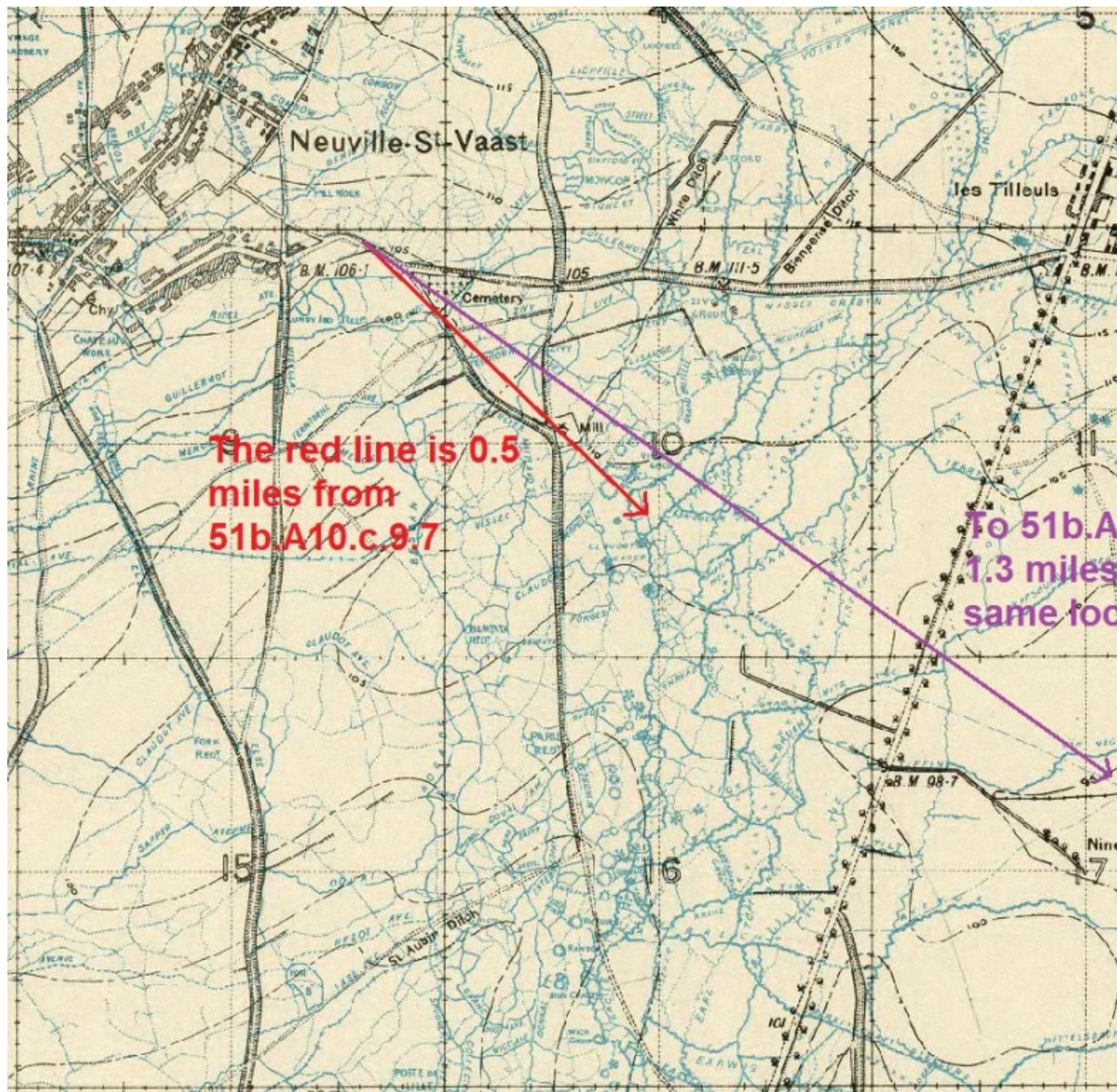
by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Dec 28, 2015 11:41 am**

... continued post 28 December 2015 ... see above for start

If we take the PHYSICAL description of the site as being 0.5 miles southeast of Neuville St.-Vaast there is better confirmation that the site is at 51b.A10.c.9.7 rather than at 51b.a17.b.1.5 as the latter is 1.3 miles from the same location. The marks on the map below show the distances back from the grid marks towards the town, neither of which take you into town. From that I think we can accept that the A10 rather than the A17 sector is the correct location for CA 40.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Mon Dec 28, 2015 12:02 pm**

Deleted. Sorry, wrong place for this post.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **raughton**

Posted: **Mon Dec 28, 2015 12:03 pm**

... continued post 28 December 2015 ... see above for start

For a few fleeting seconds Norm shows an aerial view of where CA40 was located, if it was the crater. I don't have that original but I marked up his version and you can see that the trench map coordinates at 51b.A10.c.9.7 are actually in a trench and not in a crater. The crater, if it is where he marked it, is at 51b.A10.c.80.65 (where the 80 and 65 mean 8.0 and 6.5). If you go back to the trench map above,



you can see a solid blue dot in that location. Either the Burial Company got the map coordinates wrong or the 40 men are not buried in the crater, rather in a trench about 75 yards to the northwest. Based on what I have seen in the records, it is my suspicion that the crater is where Norm marked it and the grid references are wrong.

I have added the RED markings for the trench map coordinates with the red-yellow star and put an orange box around what Norm has marked.



If you go a bit further in the show, Norm shows the other craters at Zivy Crater (now a cemetery of the encapsulated remains), Vissec Crater and Claudot Crater. **Is it coincidental that the grid references that I marked above, for what I assumed is a trench, is where Vissec Crater is marked?** It may be that the markings are below the craters that are shown, so perhaps the ones northwest of each of the names? We should be able to tell from the trench map grids for Zivy Crater. That is correct as Zivy Crater is at **51b.A10.b.1.7**, which if you go back to the trench map is clearly marked. The Claudot Group of craters is also marked at an area south of what may be CA40 at the new grid location (**51b.A10.c.8.4**). It appears to me that the largest crater at **51b.A10.c.8.8** is part of the Vissec Group. If I recall correctly, we may have thought that larger one was CA40? If you look up at the first clip of the aerial I now assume it is that large crater just above the orange box and that is at **51b.A10.c.8.8**.

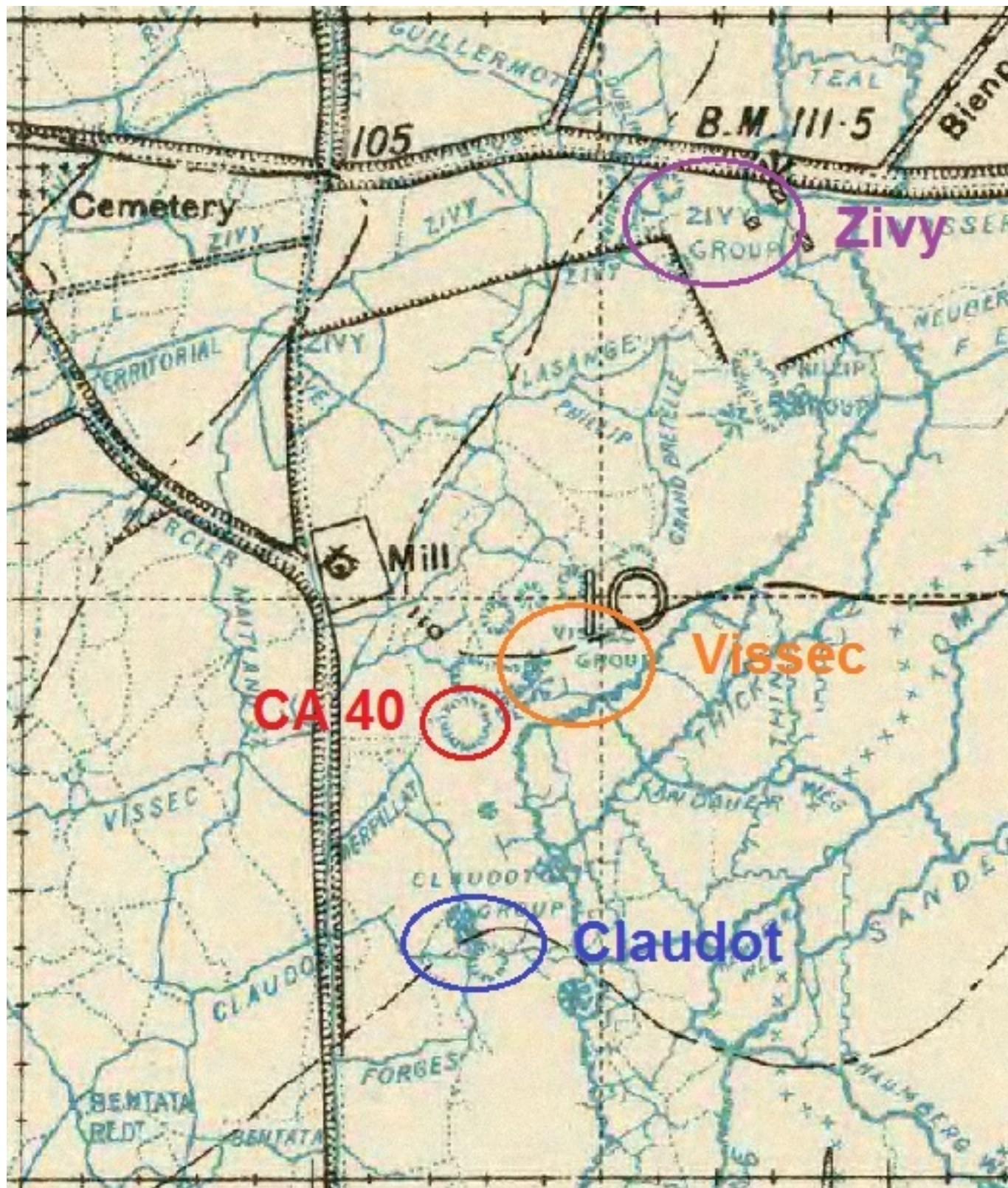
**So back to the question:** Why does the CWGC give a completely different location and if it is wrong, why has the page never been changed? Perhaps it is time to ask the CWGC directly 🗨️



## Great War Tour Recover Our Vimy Heroes

Are these then correct?





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by McTague

Posted: Mon Dec 28, 2015 2:07 pm

So then, Richard, which were the hours that were wasted? Perhaps I should ask Olga? 🤔

It seems, to me, that you could not have gotten to where you are without a certain amount of toil, corroborative reading, retention, review.



Countless hours, no doubt.

I will use this opportunity to thank you for all of your efforts and sneak in my sincerest appreciation to all the members for the collective effort I see ongoing.

I find I have to express my gratitude and appreciation in finer disguise as I grow older and my more effusive New Year's encouragements are, now, a thing of the past.

Happy New Year to all, Tim.

PS...Thanks for the links to the video...I have never seen any of this stuff.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Dec 29, 2015 9:34 am**

I am looking at some of the COG-BR records and I noticed that on the card for 16th Battalion Pte. Firth Duncan #718675, an identified Canadian in 1.G.39, that the description on his COD and WGR is EXACTLY the same as what is given for Milne and the others at CA 40.

That is: 1/2 mile southeast of Neuville St.-Vaast and 3 3/4 miles north of Arras

The grave location was **57b.A10.d.2.6** which is about 150 yards southeast of CA40. I point that out just so we know not to attribute all graves with that generic description as being from CA40. We can assume that applies to anything in the 57b.A10 area.

Nine Elms Cemetery is at **51b.A17.a.10.75**, which when converted to GPS coordinates is **50.3467, 2.7847**, which when inserted into Google Earth is a direct match. As shown on GE Street View, that is immediately on the west side of the road:



If we use the same GPS converter program, which so far appears to be dead accurate, then we have CA40 at **51b.A10.c.9.7** found at GPS coordinates **50.3507, 2.7771** which comes out on GE as being very close to where the brown depression is in the field. That is 1.3 km (0.78 miles) from the centre of Neuville St.-Vaast at a heading of 111 degrees southeast. We can not see that on Street View as it is too far from the road, but is clear from the satellite view:



If we use the CWGC description from their web page then I place their CA40 at about **51b.A17.b.40.48** or GPS **50.3457, 2.7931** in the middle of a modern day clover leaf on the main highway. I am not sure but Ted may have made the same mistake I did at the start and put it 274 metres east of the current MAIN ROAD and not 274 metres west of the 1917 main road into Thelus - I will confirm with Ted.

***rlaughton 16-01-2016 wrote:***

You will see as we progress with this investigation that there are issues that I may have erred with in the early stages, so you need to go through all these posts to the END to get the complete picture:

- There is a question as to what the CWGC means as the "Main Road". One might assume it is the main road into Thelus, if you were dealing only with this area, but I have now found other references where they commonly refer to the main road as the one from Arras to Lens (the one that passes through "les Tilleuls") and to the west of the road to Thelus.
- The early trench maps do not show all the light rail lines, so later in the project "vimyboy" raised this issue and we had to go look at trench maps from 1918 forward. That could quite well be what the CWGC used when they said "274 metres west of the main road by the light rail". Note also that 274 metres is about 300 yards, so that was probably the original estimate of the distance.
- Changing from 274 metres west of the Road into les Tilleuls instead of 274 metres west of the road to Thellus opens up a new series of light rail lines. Only the light rail line in sector A17 was there in 1917.

Burial Site **CA39** (*became Arras Road Cemetery prior to concentration*) is where they recovered the bodies of 39 men must be COG-BR page 2618051 which has Pte. Wearer, Pte. Bradley and l.Cpl. Park identified (initial count 24 men). The grid mark is **57b.A11.c.3.0**. This burial area, which I initially thought was CA35 (as 24 of 15th Battalion - there must be more) at **51b.A11.c.3.0** is GPS **50.3479, 2.7862**, is to the northeast of the cemetery and that appears as a forested area in GE and at Street View appears to be a very secure area - any ideas? This burial site is marked by the yellow pin.





Burial site CA35 site is reported by the CWGC to be 914 metres (1,000 yds) west of Nine Elms Cemetery. COG-BR page 2618035 refers (see last line) to a CA35 at 51.b.A16.a.11 (must be a.1.1). That page does list 23 men of the 15th Battalion, so that one is resolved.

CA26 where they exhumed 72 men of the 5th Battalion (I count 73) must be what is shown on 3 COGBR sheets starting at 2618053, which is at trench map coordinates **51b.A16.d.6.1** or GPS **50.3400, 2.7820**. Google Earth tells us that is 0.76 km south of the Nine Elms Cemetery, on the east edge of the road, 140 metres southeast of Arras Road (Military) Cemetery, which is on the west side of the road at **51b.a16.d.65.50** or GPS coordinates **50.3415, 2.7820**. There are no distinguishing features at CA26. That is the "real" location where it is located and that does not agree what the GRRF say as **51b.A16.b.85.20**. I will need to go and check the burials at the Arras Road Cemetery to see what groups were there, as that is a prime candidate for local burials.

There is mention of a CA3 on COG-BR page 2618036 but that is not mentioned on the CWGC page for Nine Elms Cemetery - although it does say "*certain small cemeteries, including:*" and so there must have been others. I am not sure why CA3 is not listed (there is a CC3 listed) as it has 30 men listed. It



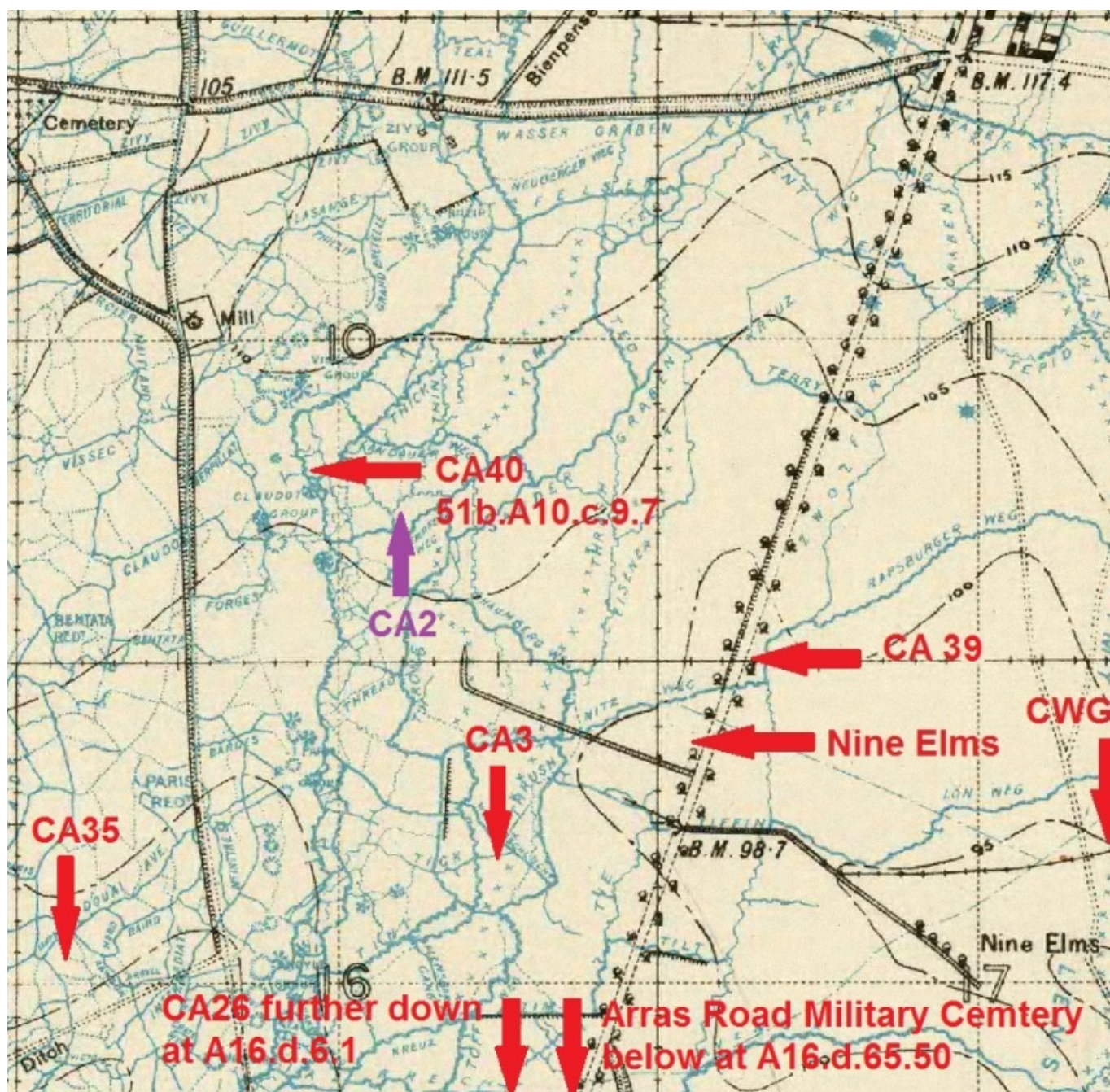
may be because it has a mixture of men from the 7th, 10th, 16th and 20th Battalions (perhaps others). The GPS coordinates for that spot are **50.3454, 2.7812**.

Likewise there is CA2 mentioned on COG-BR page 2618042 at **51b.A10.d.3.5**. That is awfully close to where the alternate CA40 is shown - is that coincidence or not? The GPS coordinates for that are **50.3499, 2.7797**.

That wraps this part up for now, before I lose all these references! I am off to check what is at the Arras Road Cemetery. Norm mentioned in the show that he checked the other cemeteries but I need to find out what is there.

These are the images that match the above reference points. I will need to redo the trench map as some of them were further south than what I anticipated at the start. I will also later label the Google Earth image but the reference numbers are shown that match what is above.

At this point I am back with Ted questioning if Norm has CA40 where the CWGC says it was located???







## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Dec 29, 2015 1:49 pm**

Richard, I am still disturbed by CWGC's description of where CA40 was. There is no doubt there is a depression at 51B.A.10.c.9.8 (50.3511, 2.7771)...my photo above (with the 16th Btn Cdn flag) does not show it well, but the depression is clearly evident when you are standing in it. Video and other pictures I have from this location match very well with video and photos Mr Christie has produced.

Now, I believe, as you do, the location CWGC describes is 51B.A.17.b.1.5 (50.3459, 2.7914). And the most pertinent parts of the description are *west of the main road* and *by the light railway track*.

Rue d'Arras is undoubtedly the main road. That stretch of road running from the N17 up to D49, is not

a good candidate for the *main road*. If it was the *main road*, then yes, *274 metres West of the main road* would be applicable. But where is the light rail? There was no light rail here.

**I hope we are wrong and that CWGC or better yet, Mr Christie would shed some light on the confusion raised by the description.**

I fear that our efforts may be in vain and the time to recover these men lapsed when the A26 motorway was constructed over CWGC's described location.

As always Richard, I am amazed by the questions you have answered, and equally impressed by the questions you have raised.

All the best, Ted

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Dec 29, 2015 3:48 pm**

This post was amended on December 30, 2015 with additional information added to the CA-CD listings of the concentrated cemeteries.

It was amended again on January 12, 2016 after locating C17 and the associated confusion.

Ted - I think we are starting to get somewhere with this more detailed analysis. It is easy to ask questions, sometimes they ruin someone's analysis, but often more difficult to provide the answer.

Go back to the last post on the first page of this topic where we had the 6 men of the 60th Battalion who were KIA not in April 1917 but in November 1916. The 60th Battalion was later replaced in the 9th Infantry Brigade by the 116th Battalion after the decimation. I went back and looked at the COD files for those men and they were definitely in the crater at 51b.A10.c.9.6 (later it was c.9.7 but the same). The COD for Private Godbeer #457329 even refers specifically to the fact that he was at the end of **Bentata Trench**, which Norm describes in his video. I don't think there is any doubt that there is a crater there but I am more than certain now that it is not CA40.

Try this on for size. If these 6 men were killed in November 1916 at that location and they were exhumed in May 1919 then how did they miss the 40 men of the 16th Battalion? Would not the men that were killed some 5 months earlier be deeper in the hole than those killed in April 1917? Perhaps they were buried on the edge of the crater, so anything is possible. There may be a slight problem with this as Bentata Trench appears to end at 51b.A10.c.6.0, but if you look closely on the trench map there appears to be an extension of the trench that heads north from c.6.0 (that might be the part that is the tunnel as it is ..... ) that comes out at the Claudio Group and continues to 51b.A10.c.9.5, approximately.

I am taking another troll through the COG-BR pages that were assembled to see if there is ANY mention of CA40, as I do not recall seeing that site. To note that while in that pass I did notice these, which I had never paid attention to previously but will probably be important in the final analysis: (COG-BR page - will link later - some already mentioned - to see these now put numbers in <http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 999999.JPG>)

For those new to the grave codes for field burial sites it is important to remember that C=Canadian and then after that A=1st Division, B=2nd Division, C=3rd Division and d=4th Division. The number is probably just sequential.

It is also clear from the list that the CA, CB, CC or CD designation is based on the "Burial Officer's Division" and not on the Division of the men that are buried at that location, as we have mixed divisions in the same coded areas.

**CA1 - 51b.A16.d.3.4**

- (2618031) - 17 men of the 2nd Infantry Brigade
- (2618032) - 3 men of mixed units

**CA2 - 51b.A10.d.5.5 (2618042) - 11 men of mixed and unknown units**

**CA3 - 51b.A16.b.5.4 - 30 men**

- (2618036) - 18 men who may be 2nd Infantry Brigade or a mixture
- 92618037) - 12 men of 1st & 2nd Divisions

**CA6 - 51b.A11.d.2.3 (2618029) - 6 men 1st & 2nd Divisions**

**CA19 - 51b.A17.b.1.5 (2618027) - 5 men of 3rd B. and 1 man of the 19th Bn.**

**CA24 - 51b.A15.b.3.2 (2618039) - i amn of the 4th Bn.**

**CA26 - 51b.A16.d.6.1**

- (2618053) - 25 of the 72 the 5th Bn. group so must be CA26
- (2618054) - 25 more of the 5th Battalion group
- (2618055) - 23 more of the 5th Battalion group = 73 not 72, Brabant is #908091

**CA34 - 51b.A16.c.6.4 (2618032) - 9 men of the 10th Bn.**

**CA35 - 51b.A16.a.9.8 (2618035) - 23 men of the ~~10th Bn.~~ 15th Bn. (corrected 25 July 2016)**

- initially I thought this was A16.a.1.1 but I see that last line probably means they were in A16 and A11 as 521b.A16.a.9.8 is in the corner between those 2 sectors. Later we again find direct references to CA35 at 51b.A16.a.1.1 so I am confused?

**new find 5 December 2016:**

**CA37 - 51b.A.11.c.9.1 - 3 Sergeants of the 13th Bn. lost there Goodwin, Stark and Warne**

- it is marked on their E-13 WGR forms, found while making Nine Elms spreadsheet and looking for 1.C.14 Sergeant

**CA39 - was named Arras Road Cemetery prior to concentration in Nine Elms and new Arras Road Cemetery was constructed at 51b.A16.d.65.50, but not related to CA39**

- 51b.A11.c.3.0 (2618051) - 24 part of list of 36

**CA? - 51b.A10.c.9.5 (2618041) - 6 men of the 60th Bn. lost in 1916**

- men at where Norm says is CA40 but not named here, so why would they not name it as CA40  
 - buried here 6 to 7 months prior to Vimy Ridge, they would have been harder to find  
 - I do not believe it is CA40 anymore!

**CA41 - 51b.A15.b.3.0 (2618039) - very close to CA24? - 3 men of 3rd MGC**

**CB7 - 51b.B6.c.90.05 (2618049) - 19 men who were moved to CB7 first then to Nine Elms**

**CC59 51b.A4.d.3.7 (2618046 - and not 36c map as stated)**

**Unknown Burial Site Numbers:**

**Unknown A11 Site 1 - 55 Canadian Soldiers (could this be CB10 where CWGC says 52 Canadians, 2 UK?)**

- 51b.A11.a.7.6 (2618061) - 23 Canadian Soldiers 4th & 5th Infantry Brigades
- 51b.A11.a.7.6 (2618062) - 19 Canadian Soldiers 4th & 5th Infantry Brigades
- 51b.A11.a.7.6 (2618052) - 13 men who appear to be mainly 2nd Division
- **Unknown A4 Site**
  - 51b.A4.a.5.9 (2618045) - 26 men of 2nd and 3rd Divisions



**Memorial Crosses Relocated** - later removed when names added to Vimy Memorial

- **Unknown A11 Site 1** - this cross was in the same area as the 42 known graves above
  - 51b.A11.a.7.6 (2618065) - 24 names only mainly of 4th & 5th Infantry Brigades
- **Combined CB5 & CB10 Location**
  - 8 men of the 1st (CA) and 10 men of the 2nd Division (CB), so it was a CB burial officer as noted above
  - CB5 - 51b.A10.b.95.95 (2618066)
  - CB10 - 51b.A11.a.7.6 (2618066) - same location as Unknown A11 site above

**British Burial Grounds**

- 51b.A23.a.2.0 (2618060) - Roclincourt Square Cemetery (Roclincourt Forward Cemetery No. 5) - 18 of 23 men mentioned
- 51b.A23.a.mix (2618056) - may or may not be part of this group but same A23 area
- 51b.A23.a.mix (20618058) - Seaforth Grave, Roclincourt (Roclincourt Forward Cemetery No. 4) - 12 men
- 51b.A23.c/d.mix (2618059) - 7 British men

With all these references and details there is **NO MENTION** of any **CA40**. Did the CWGC mention CA40 on the page for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery in error? Of course they did, as there are no men on the COG-BR so they never were exhumed and put in this Nine Elms (and by the way the other one is in Belgium - Nine Elms British Cemetery).

I am going to have a look at what is listed in the Arras Road Military Cemetery, just a 3 iron south on the same road.

January 12, 2016:

I have come across a **C17 burial ground** (it only has one letter but mainly 16th Bn. so probably CA17) and all of those remains seem to have gone to **ORCHARD DUMP CEMETERY**, where C17 is shown to be at **51b.B.3.b.7.4** and in some cases, even on the same sheet at c.7.4. In one case it is also shown as **44a.T.29** (see COD James #718941 and COG-BR 2456257).

It may be that it is CB17 and that it what was known as **WILLERVAL** and prior to that **VANCOUVER** - but for that you have to go forward to this post where I start to deal with Orchard Dump.

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **rlaughton**Posted: **Tue Dec 29, 2015 4:40 pm**

I updated the list in the above post as I went through the details in the COG-BR documents. A clear picture is starting to form! As such, I think my analysis in the paragraphs below may have been in vain as the missing men of the 16th Battalion were not in one of the other cemeteries, they were **obliterated**! Nope, not correct, that was those in **CA39** (old Arras Road Cemetery) that were obliterated and are now on Special Memorial No. 13)

At the Arras Road Cemetery it appears there are graves here for men not only in 51b but also 44a (same as 36c) to the north, 57d to the west and 51c to the south - plus others in lesser amounts. These appear not to be classified as was the case at Nine Elms Cemetery, I think because these were recovered by a British unit that did not use the same recording process. There are NO large group burials at this cemetery so it is off the list as a candidate for CA40 men.

The next closest candidate appears to be the Thelus Military Cemetery. I only have GRRF forms for that cemetery, no COG-BR documents. For the Canadians, it appears to have a mixture of those from 1917 and the later action in 1918. There are large groups for the 5th Infantry Brigade of the 2nd Canadian Division. No sign of any groups from the 16th Battalion or any mention of CA burial grounds.

Of we go to the east to the Bois Carre British Cemetery, past where the CWGC says CA40 is located. This cemetery does have COG-BR records, with a lot from the 51b.B and 44a.S sectors. There is



nothing here from CA40 or the 16th Battalion.

Other ones I have to come back to check are:

La Targette British Cemetery (only GRRF at this time)

La Chaudiere Military Cemetery - there are a few scattered men of the 16th but no large groups

I will return!

Where I stand at the moment:

1. I have not found any references to men being buried in CA40 other than on the CWGC page.
2. I find no reference to CA40 being where Norm Christie says it is located. There is most likely a crater cemetery there but why does he think it is CA40? Does it matter if it has a different name/code?
3. There is no reference to the exhumation of the men of the 16th Battalion other than the CWGC page at the CA40 they specify - not Norm's.
4. There are a number of COD files for men of the 16th being buried at 51b.A10.c.9.7 where Norm is investigating at the crater site.
5. The men of the 60th Battalion at the 51b.A10.c.9.6 site lost in 1916 were exhumed and buried at Nine Elms Military Cemetery. The sheet does not say that area was CA40.

Tomorrow this may be clearer with a fresh set of eyes. **Over to your Ted!**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 3 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 8:17 am**

I have returned with my fresh eyes and the first step was to update the list of the CA-CD burial sites in the post above. I also added in the British sites, just to complete the package, as I wanted to account for all the burial sites.

I now am of a firmer opinion that there is an alternate explanation, that being that there are no men of the 16th Battalion missing from the crater area at 51b.A10.c.9.7. Some of the men, maybe not all, may have initially been buried at the site of the crater and were subsequently concentrated by the 1st Division Burial Officer to the site of CA40 as described in the CWGC documents. I am going back after this post to check the individual COD cards of the men on 2617972 and 2617973. I had posted a spreadsheet for the Cemetery back in April 2015 so I will update that with the initial grave site details.

The final piece to this puzzle was not found by what was in the COG-BR documents, rather what was missing from those documents - or at least the ones I had recovered. I am going to go back to the CWGC Cloud Site to see if there are some sheets that I missed. That has happened before where I hit a number of blank pages and then they started again. I will return later with that answer.

So at this point, here is what I believe has happened. Please note that this is ONLY MY OPINION and it is not stated here to be a proven fact. I believe that there is as much or more evidence to say this version is what happened than what is proposed in the documentary. I will leave it to the readers to decide and whether to invest.

1. The correct location of CA40 is where the CWGC says it is located at 51b.A17.b.1.5 and that is where the 44 Canadian Soldiers of the 16th Battalion were buried. That spot is in the cloverleaf of the new highway that crosses through the area, as shown on the Google Earth map.

***rlaughton 16-01-1916 wrote:***

I now know that statement is probably wrong and that the location may be west of the road into les Tilleuls and not west of the road into Thellus. I am noting where I have made this error here and in previous posts to redirect everyone to the correct answer that comes in later posts. There are other "light rail lines" on the 1918 maps that are not on the 1916 or 1917 maps. You have to read this topic to the end to get all these pieces.

2. The depression that Norm Christie refers to as his version of CA40 is in fact the site of a large crater that existed prior to the attack of the 16th Battalion. That is located at 51b.A10.c.9.7 and there were exhumed the 6 men of the 60th Battalion that were killed in November 1916. I believe that is important for these reasons:
  - The men of the 60th Bn. would have been buried first, some 7 months earlier, so if they were recovered in 1919 would not the burial party have had to dig through the 44 men of the 16th Bn. to arrive at the men of the 60th Bn.?
  - The war diary reports that the slopes of the crater were wet and slippery and thus we could assume that there was water in the crater. I will go back and check the weather for that period but I do know from my grandfathers personal diary that the attack on Sunday the 8th was put off until Monday the 9th due to the weather (confirmed in 3rd Brigade War Diary - rain and fog). If

this was true, would the burial officer put the men in a crater that was partially full of water? This was not a shell hole that could dry out, it was a massive crater in a chalk base. I also need to check at what level the groundwater would be in that area and if it was ever possible for that crater to be free of water. If anything, the Burial Officer might have buried men at the lip of the crater but not in it. The question then becomes, what was different at Zivy and Lichfield Crater as they did bury men in those craters.

3. I think Ted has the second last piece of the puzzle and I will leave it to him to tell that part - where were the men of the 16th Bn. when they were buried?
4. The final piece of the puzzle is in the GRRF documents, as it is there that you find the complete list of the 44 men of the 16th Bn. that were killed in action, the remains are missing, and their names are now inscribed on the Vimy Memorial. These men were buried initially in CA40, at the location described by the CWGC and not in the area where Norm Christie says they are located. In the video of "The Missing" he does show us clearly that the graves are not in that site but he does not mention that the CWGC never said they were. Here is what it says exactly about CA40 on their web site:
  - *GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.*
 My initial understanding that the CWGC also referred to the 44 missing men whose graves were lost by shellfire as being related to CA40 was incorrect. Upon further review, which we must keep doing in this case, is that group of 44 men are the ones from the Arras Road Cemetery listed on Special Memorial No. 13 (GRRF 2617976). As it is known that those men were there and their graves are lost, that memorial remained at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and the names are not on the Vimy Memorial.
5. It is important to remember that is wording from circa 1921 at the time that the work was being completed, not text that was written when the CWGC made the web site. We know that from the description of the "light railway track" that no longer exists. The 44 men of the 16th Battalion no longer exist as the original CA40 was destroyed by shell fire in later battles and the graves were obliterated. We all know that was a common occurrence and here we see it in the CWGC's own words of that time.

I thought a few days ago that it would be wise to undertake a GPR study (Ground Penetrating Radar) of the existing Nine Elms Cemetery, just in case the bodies were there but were never marked. I think we can say "not needed" now. If, however, a study was to be completed at the Christie Site (which is not CA40) then the GPR should be undertaken on the field AROUND the lip of the crater, not just in the crater below.

Here are the two pages in the GRRF documents that show the names of the 44 men of the 16th Battalion. This Memorial Cross was initially in, or was planned to be placed in, the Nine Elms Cemetery on February 2, 1921. The plan was cancelled, as it was in many places, as it had been decided to inscribe the names of all the Canadian men missing on the Vimy Memorial. These men are not listed here because the bodies had been found at CA40 but rather to note that the bodies at CA40 had been lost in a latter battle. That is why there are no reports in the COG-BR documents for the exhumation of these men, they were never planned to be exhumed as in 1921 it was already known they were gone forever.

There are five (5) names that are on the lists below that are not on the spreadsheet for the Vimy Memorial. I checked those 5 and found out the following:

- Eyden #A/20049 is in Ecoivres Military Cemetery at Mont. St. Eloi 5.F.10
- Brown #160741 is in the Nine Elms Cemetery in 4.C.1
- Cooper #871443 although found at CA40 he is in the 19th Battalion
- McMartin #718847 is in Nine Elms Cemetery 1.G.29
- McGray #625136 is in the Thelus Military Cemetery but his actual grave is unknown

There are also eight (8) names on the spreadsheet that are not on the GRRF documents:

- Adamovich #736633 -NRB
- Bethel #719115 - NRB
- Cowper #420717



- Harper #722256
- McKay #736402
- McPhail #426601 - NRB
- Simmonds #736075
- Tallman #859301

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 21/2/21.

Army Form

## GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

(This report cancels all previous reports.)

REPORT No. 54

SCHEDULE No. 68

No.1. District.

PLACE OF BURIAL:- NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Commune:- T H E L U S.

Map Reference:- Sh. 51b.A.17.a.10.75.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd
CROSS. No. 8. (Contd).					
1/4th Seaforths.	201124	DOWGILL.	Cpl. F.	9/4/17	CA R/3370 (144928)
do	201542	ROWLANDS.	Pte. J.R.	"	
do	202733	COMMING.	Pte. P.	"	
do	200787	EVANS.	Pte. S.M.	"	
do	200963	McDONALD.	L/Cpl. D.	"	
CROSS. No. 9.					
16/ Can Scottish.	K29049	EYDEN.	CSM. F.S.	9/4/17	mem + 344 cm/1665 (15694B) Being Is under 3/22 Seyler
do	420819	ALLEN.	Pte. H.W.	"	
do	736569	ATTWOOD.	" L.M.	"	
do	625286	ARMITAGE.	" J.A.	"	
do	700410	BALL.	" E.V.	"	
do	736746	BETTS.	" E.E.	"	
do	736108	BLAIK.	L/Cpl. S.F.	"	
do	160741	BROWN.	Pte. J.M.	"	
do	718192	BAGULAY.	" F.	"	
do	871504	BONIVER.	" L.	"	
do	718661	BROWN.	" J.	"	
do	721564	CLEMONS.	" W.	"	
do	43945	BRADSHAW.	" R.E.	"	
do	258460	CURLEY.	" H.F.	"	
do	23823	CHANDLER.	L/Cpl. R.	"	
do	872090	COOPER.	Pte. J.R.	"	
do	871443	COOPER.	" F.	"	
do	160168	DICKSON.	" W.F.	"	
do	736317	GOODING.	" C.A.	"	



do	718755	✓	GORRIE.	X	"	J.	"	
do	722078	✓	GLASSFORD.	X	"	R.A.	"	(15694
do	624801	✓	GIBBONS.	X	"	J.H.P.	"	
do	A 2048	✓	HAMLTON.	X	Sgt.	W.	"	

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 100,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms W3372/3

ENTERED 20/1/21  
SLIPS CHECKED ac. 5-

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 21/2/21. Army Form

## GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

(This report cancels all previous reports.)

REPORT No. 54 SCHEDULE No. 69

No. 1. District.

PLACE OF BURIAL :- NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Commune:- T H E L U S.

Map Reference :- Sh. 51b.A.17.a.10.75.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd
CROSS. No. 9. (Contd).					
16/ Can Scottish.	756703	✓ HAWKINS.	✓ Pte. A. J.	9/4/17	
do	105644	✓ HENDERSON.	" W.A.	"	
do	628188	✓ HOWIE.	✓ L/Cpl. J.	"	
do	736880	✓ HOOPER.	✓ Pte. W.H.	"	
do	624957	✓ HALLIDAY.	" F.J.	"	
do	832135	✓ KILLCUP.	" H.L.	"	
do	715249	✓ KIRBY.	" A.J.	"	
do	426344	✓ LATIMER.	✓ Cpl. A.	"	
do	700022	✓ LAYCOCK.	✓ L/Cpl. W.W.	"	
do	736651	✓ LEITCH.	✓ Pte. S.W.	"	
do	718699	✓ MANNING.	" F.J.	"	
do	427586	✓ MILNE (VC)	" W.H.	"	
do	718847	✓ McMARTIN.	"	"	
do	716526	✓ McWILLIAMS.	" H.	"	
do	736171	✓ McCANDLESS.	" T.	"	
do	420765	✓ MCCOWAN.	" D.	"	
do	625156	✓ McGRAY.	" H.S.	"	
do	859684	✓ OWEN.	" R.	"	
do	718269	✓ PATTISON.	" R.	"	
do	736967	✓ PIERCE.	" G.B.	"	
do	105741	✓ PHILLIPS.	" F.V.	"	
do	624593	✓ PARSONS.	" A.H.	"	
do	700967	✓ PIERCE.	" W.	"	

5/635  
(15695)  
(15694)  
SEE 3/22840  
(1569)

do	757084	POWELL.	✓	"	L.C.	"	
do	417984	RUB.	✓	"	A.	"	R/44458
do	129200	RUDDOCK.	✓	"	A.F.	"	
do	77309	SIMMONS.	✓	Sgt.	I.H.	"	23/6
do	624477	SNELGROVE	✓	Pte.	T.A.	"	
do	874370	SPALDING.	✓	"	J.	"	
do	625305	STICKLER.	✓	"	J.M.	"	
do	719161	WILLERTON.	✓	"	J.	"	22/31
do	129336	TARLTON.	✓	PTE	R.H.	"	(156946)

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 100,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms W3372/3

ENTERED  
156946  
a.c.s

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 8:33 am**

More to follow....yes indeed, the 16th began their morning in what Christie calls CA40. Can't find it now, but I did read they assembled and leapt off from the rim of this crater. Might make you think this was a convenient place to bring the men back to, but where we believe CA40 (under the A26 motorway) to be is actually 500 metres closer to where they ended their morning at Zwischen Stellung trench. I believe the 16th was leap-frogged by the 4th Btn and 21 st Btn after reaching their objective. And, I believe it would have been easier to move the fallen men laterally to the south, rather than back to the west, given that the ground back to where they came from was more cratered.

Unfortunately, the 16th could not provide locations on the way to their objective as their intelligence officer was wounded, but you can infer their location from the diaries of the 15th Btn (on their right) and the 18th Btn (on their left). Also the 14th Btn who began the trek on their immediate right.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 11:48 am**

I agree with that analysis Ted and could only add that it appears that they may have fallen at the site of the crater at **51b.A10.c.9.7** and then later the 1st Divisional Burial Officer collected the men from those battlefield graves and moved them to CA40 located at **51b.A17.b.1.5**.

I have started to go through the COD files for some of the men and it appears so far that the eight (8) men that are on the spreadsheet but not on the Memorial Cross List are ones that are listed as missing and having no known burial. That provides some evidence to our claim that the men that are on the Memorial Cross are those that were known to have battlefield burial sites, were later collected by the 1st Division Burial Officer's unit and moved to CA40 - the concentrated 16th Battalion site at **51b.A17.b.1.5** (*read later posts that location is changing as we learn more!*). As described in the previous posts, the men are no longer at the site of the crater **51b.A10.c.9.7** and that area is NOT CA40.

Take a look at the cards for Pte. Robert Bradshaw #43945. It shows these characteristics:

- The first page of the COD file reports that he was "Killed in Action" at Vimy and that for Box 12 CEMETERY it says Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Memorial Section - the rest I can't read.
- The initial burial site on the second page of the COD file is listed as approximately **51b.A10.c.9.7** and the physical description agrees in that it states it was 1/2 mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast. 3 3/4 miles North of Arras and that that "Grave Registered".
- When we look at the WGR file, which I am now confident is prepared prior to the COD file, we have what I believe has caused all the confusion. It appears to be saying that the "Place of Burial" is a Grave No. C.A.40 and that the "Location" is at (now corrected on this form) **51b.A10.c.9.7**, and



then the physical site description that is copied over to page 2 of the COD file. I am now also watching what is listed as the "Casualty Sheet No.", as his is "A.636" as compared to say Glassord #722078 which is "A.637". That might be chronological or some other specific order.

- I believe that what the card or file actually means is that the body was buried where it fell in the vicinity of **51b.A10.c.9.7** and that it was collected and buried in the cemetery identified by the **1st Division Burial Officer as CA40 located at 51b.A17.b.1.5**. Somewhere there must be a record of these "Burial Details" or "Burial Officers" that will answer that question precisely. I checked the War Diary database and do not see anything. It appears it will be in "1st Canadian Division - Administrative Branches of the Staff" but unfortunately April 1917 is missing. In June they do show the Burial Areas for the horses so they must have done the same for the men?

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAME
43945	Private	BRADSHAW	Robert Edward
5. UNIT OR SHIP		6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.
16th Battalion		9-4-17	649-B-10439
8. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
"Killed in Action"			
10. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
VIMY			
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	
<i>1st Canadian Div. Cem.</i> <i>6th Div. + 6th Div. Cem.</i>		Grave..... Plot..... Row.....	
15. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	16. EXPOSURE NO.	17. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLEMENT	
18. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

## H. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

$\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles North of Arras, France. (Grave Registered)

## H. REMARKS:

Approx.Location, Sheet 51b.A.10.c.9.7.

FORM E11 1654-10M-16-11-16			
NUMBER	43045	RANK	Pte
NAME	BRADSHAW R.E. 649-B		
UNIT	16th Bn	NEXT-OF-KIN	Mrs Galinde Weelme 131. Lansdowne Ave Toronto
FILE NO. R.L.	25-13-3410		
DATE OF DEATH		CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
9-4-17		KILLED IN ACTION	
DATE OF BURIAL		PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
<i>BR by GRC. Memorial Cross. Nine Elms Mil Cem. Thelus 3 Miles S of Arras. Nk 21165-A. Memorial Plot.</i>		<i>Grave No. C.A. 40- Location A.10.c. 9.7. Sib. H.C. A.10.c. 9.7. Burial Report by G.R.C. 1/2 mile S.E. of Arras St. Vaast. 3 3/4 miles N. of Arras.</i>	<i>Authority on R.L. 26. 7a BR/2249/SGR BR/2494 SGR.</i>
<b>VIMY</b> <b>MEMORIAL</b>			

I will check some of the others as well.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 2:29 pm**

Deleted, incorrect post

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **RG 60th**

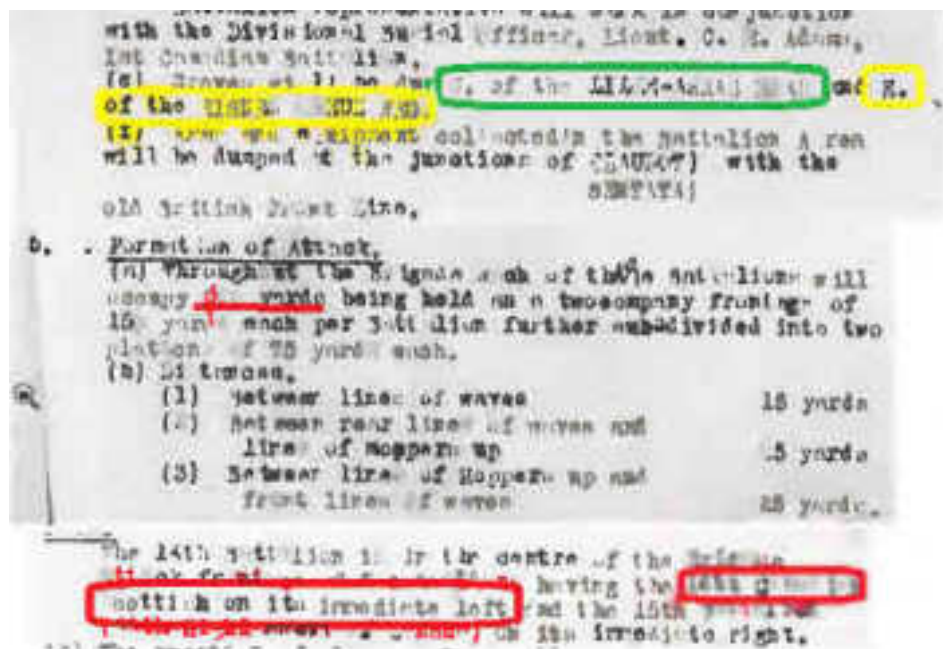
Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 4:40 pm**

The 60th Battalion war diary for the 26th November 1916 in part reads:

"left Coy Headquarters blown in by direct shell hit of one of our trench mortars falling short.







## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **fatford41**

Posted: **Wed Dec 30, 2015 8:40 pm**

Be advised Norm Christie is waiting for a phone call to discuss the subject.

Tel : 1-613-823-7000

Email: norm.christie@cefbooks.ca, info@battlefields.ca

Cheers

Bob

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Dec 31, 2015 11:07 am**

**Ted**, I got the images to appear and sent you a PM. It was the software not you. I wish I could explain why. It appears that JPEG files are not working properly but GIF and PDF work fine 🤔 ?

**Bob**, do I understand you correctly that someone contacted Norm Christie and he is following this discussion? If so, that is great but I doubt that this is something anyone can discuss on the phone. In a meeting, with all the information in front of you for sure. I am not sure we are at that point yet, but with the money at stake we can certainly do that when the time is right. I have notified Neil and Peter so we can activate Norm here quickly if he can join in the discussion. The CEFSG FORUM is the appropriate place at the moment to lay out all the details and have a productive discussion - our online WHITE BOARD. There is still a lot more work to do! One of my Milton Boys is on the list (Private Baguley) so believe me I am taking this seriously. It was my start on the local fund raising to find Private Baguley (money to go to Norm's fund) that brought me back to this topic and the need to be ABSOLUTELY SURE that Norm's case was solid.

Now back to the topic and following up on Ted's post and those areas. I am only on the fringe of this part at this time but let me take it one at a time and see where it goes, as it is certainly most confusing.

There are a number of groups that we need to look at to resolve this case:

1. 54 men that are on the 2 GRRF pages for Memorial Cross No. 9 (261792 and 261793)
2. 49 men that are on the Vimy Memorial - I have those all on a spreadsheet.
3. 5 men (including Cooper of the 19th Bn.) who were to be on Memorial Cross No. 9 but are not on the Vimy List. **ERROR Cooper is 16th Bn. CWGC page is incorrect - I will send in correction.**
4. 8 men who are on the Vimy Memorial but were not on the Memorial Cross No. 9 list.
5. 48 men on the CWGC who are in known burial sites, including 2 in Lichfield Crater and 2 in Zivy Crater, all recorded on a separate spreadsheet.

*Be cautious if you are downloading and using the CWGC databases to spreadsheets in that the units do not separate properly. For example, a number of the men of the 116th showed up on this list so they have to be deleted.*

The first ones I am looking at are those 5 men (Cooper is now added back in, that was a CWGC error) that were on the Memorial Cross No. 9 List that were not on the Vimy Memorial list. Let us look at Private James Brown #160741 as an example.

- Pte. Brown is listed on COD-1 as KIA on April 9, 1917 and only once the grave was permanently located (as so stated on the file), he is shown as buried in Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
- Pte. Brown's reported location of his grave COD-2, which would be the "*battlefield grave*" is 1 mile east of Neuville St.Vaast, 4.5 miles north of Arras - Grave Registered. That page also notes that this is approximately at **51b.A10.c.9.7**, a grid reference that everyone following this topic will instantly recognize as the location of the crater where the men of the 60th Bn. fell in November 1916.
- Note that if you compare the COD file for Pte. Brown to that of Pte. Bradshaw, shown in a previous post, the physical description is different. Bradshaw's file says the same location is 0.5 miles southeast of Neuville St.Vaast and 3.75 miles north of Arras, also at **51b.A10.c.9.7**. What this means is "do not take the physical descriptions as exact". Trigonometry tells us those two physical descriptions set you 0.9 miles apart - and that is the difference of 51b.A10.0.0 and 51b.A11.5.0, so significant. If you feel inclined to follow the physical descriptions then you will find you are out in the area of **51b.A11.a.5.5**, about where CB10 is located.
- If we move over to Pte. Brown's WGR file, which we now know is created prior to the COD file, we will find that it does say (after correction of the map number) he was found at **51b.A10.c.9.7**. It also says that the place of burial, if we take it as the literal interpretation, is Grave No. CA.40. This file tells us also that the final burial location for Pte. Brown is in Nine Elms Cemetery and it appears to refer to a location "in front of Plot 4 and in the center of Row G". That appears from the schematic of the cemetery to lie between Plot 4 and Plot 5. If I read the file correctly, this was to be a "Special Cross" as they knew he was in Nine Elms Cemetery but his actual grave was unknown. Subsequently I came across GRRF 2617967 that confirms that was the plan, then cancelled.
- We have an extra stop in the case of Pte. Brown that we did not have with Pte. Bradshaw as he was initially an UNKNOWN (GRRF) in Nine Elms Cemetery but in the end he was identified as being the soldier in Plot 4 Row C Grave 1, well almost. What it does show is that they could not be sure which one of three he was so it is a case of "Buried Near this Spot" with Brown in 4.C.1, McGray in 4.C.2 (also on Mem. Cross. 9) and Clark in 4.C.3 (18th Bn.).
- As we now know where these 3 men are buried, within the limitations of those 3 graves, we know they must have been initially buried in the same location and they could not separate the remains well enough to enable identification. Now we then need to take a look at the COG-BR (2618061) document for that exhumation and reburial and what we find is that the 3 men were all initially buried at **51b.A11.a.7.6** which places them exactly where I believe Ted was directing us in his post regarding the burial ground of the 14th Battalion, as that 16th Battalion area is immediately to the left and a little further east on the ZWOLFUR TRENCH. Note also at this time, as they were later recorded on the draft GRRF, that they are UNKNOWN.
- What we now know about the body at this time is that it has moved from the original area where Pte. Brown was reported to have fallen at **51b.A10.c.9.7** to a burial location at **51b.A11.a.7.6**.  
**That is the proof that the men were not left at the crater area but rather the remains were**



gathered by the Burial Officer and moved to the battalion burial area. In reality it was likely a "Divisional Burial Area" as that is how they were designated. The important point here is that the body was not left at the crater on the front lines and if they were collecting one body, it is obvious that they were collecting all the remains. I expect that we will find that as we move onto the next set of remains, as remember, this is only a random example.

- The case of Pte. Brown also provided us with an additional clue in that his burial location is noted on a second COG-BR (2618066) and one that identifies his Divisional Burial location as CB10, as recorded on the CWGC web page and here identified as the site with the grid reference **51b.A11.a.7.6**. I take that as conclusive that Pte. Brown's remains were recovered from the battlefield at location **51b.A10.c.9.7**, buried at CB10 at **51b.A11.a.7.6** in the period immediately after the battle in April or May 1917. I can not be positive on the date as the pages are damaged, but if we rely on the other pages it would appear that Pte. Brown was exhumed from CB10 and moved to the Nine Elms Cemetery **51b.A17.a.10.75** in May of 1919. On February 21, 1921 he was still identified in Nine Elms Cemetery (GRRF 2617951) as an UNKNOWN SOLDIER, later changed to Pte. J. M. Brown. The reference to the "Buried Near This Spot" is noted in the last paragraph of the CWGC web page. That same paragraph that refers to the shell fire destruction of the cemetery containing the 44 men from Canada, which I initially thought might be the 44 men of the 16th Battalion in CA40 but it is not - rather those 44 are the men of the Arras Road Cemetery listed on Special Memorial Cross No. 13 (GRRF 2617976). As it is known where those men were and that they are now lost, that Special Memorial stayed at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and their names were not transferred to the Vimy Memorial as "unknown".

This is only one more cog in the wheel but an important one as it clearly shows the remains were collected from the crater area, moved to a Divisional Burial Ground and then exhumed and moved to Nine Elms Cemetery. The difference between those at CB10 and CA40 (based on what is provided by the CWGC) is that the graves at CA40 ~~were destroyed in a subsequent battle and there were no bodies to exhumate and relocate~~ (incorrect statement, that was another site for the 44 men of the 15th Battalion).

Please excuse any of my typos or other errors in the above post as it took many hours to assemble. I will come back with fresh eyes and make any corrections and then move on to a few of the other men.

For simplicity of viewing, here are the main CWGC documents that refer to the case of Private Brown. They are all hyperlinked as discussed in the post above.

**CONCENT**

**BURIAL RETURN.**

Name of Cemetery of Reburial **NINE ELMS British Cemetery. Sheet 51b. A.17.a.10.75.**

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Wern
					<b>MEMORIAL CROSS.</b>		
					(In Memory of the u/m. Canadian Soldiers who fell in Action 10th. April, 1917 and are buried at this spot.		
					O.B.3 THELUS 51b. A.10. b.95.95.		
					C.B.10 " 51b. A.11. a.7.6.		
					Cross removed from 51b.A.11.a.7.6.		
					<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>414509 Sgt.A.Oliver.15th.Cans. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>Kennedy. L/Cpl. 16th.Can.Bn. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>160741 Pte.J.M.Brown. do. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>758206 Pte.J.Harvie. do. ✓ 17-4-17.</p> <p>29287 Sgt.Maj.T.Middlemas.do. ✓ 18-4-17.</p> <p>625156 Pte.McGray. do. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>Unknown. do. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>756486 Pte.C.B.Searle. do. ✓ 15-4-17.</p> <p>412204 Pte.A.Clark 18th.Cans. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>769580 Pte.S.Heard. do. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>769139 Pte.A.E.Rowland.do. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>176371 Pte.T.Mitchell. do. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>156735 Pte.G.H.Thompson. do. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>123304 Pte.W.Nelson. do. ✓ 10-4-17.</p> <p>195459 Pte.R.B.Hawkins.19th.Cans. ✓ 10-4-17.</p> <p>21362 Pte.J.M.Makney. do. ✓ 22-4-17.</p> <p>213268 Pte.T.Hughes. do. ✓ 9-4-17.</p> <p>882528 L/Cpl.C.A.Jorden or Gorden. 20th.Cans. 10-4-17.</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;"> <p>4-E-11</p> <p>4-E-12</p> <p>4-E-13</p> <p>4-E-14</p> <p>4-E-15</p> <p>4-E-16</p> <p>4-E-17</p> <p>4-E-18</p> <p>4-E-19</p> </div> </div>		

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial Office.

S156. WLW118.H.P.6348. 200,000(-). 6/19. S.O.F.R.4



REF. MAP 51B 1/40000

## CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

Sheet Number 32.  
2 & 3/5/19.

**Burial Return.**

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial NINE ELMS. THELUS

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
4	C	1	A 11 a 7.6.	YES	An unknown Soldier. <u>XY/2850</u>	NO
4	C	2	-do-	YES	-do-	NO
4	C	3	-do-	YES	-do-	NO
4	C	4	-do-	YES	213168 Pte. T. HUGHES. <u>W. 10 Bn. Canadians.</u>	NO
4	C	5	-do-	YES	59755 " D.O. Donovan. <u>21st</u>	NO
4	C	6	-do-	YES	636225 " <u>C.W. Brownell. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	7	-do-	YES	636455 " <u>H.E. Somerville. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	8	-do-	YES	142530 " <u>W. Graham. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	9	-do-	YES	An unknown Soldier.	NO
4	C	10	-do-	YES	47188 Pte. <u>B. Jones. UNKNOWN.</u>	NO
4	C	11	-do-	YES	675915 " <u>E.A. Harfield. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	12	-do-	YES	444239 " <u>D. Campbell. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	13	-do-	YES	59296 L/C <u>J.A. Ellison. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	14	-do-	YES	14117 A/L. Sgt. <u>F. Shipley. 21st</u>	NO
4	C	15	-do-	YES	Unknown Opl.	NO
4	C	16	-do-	YES	An Unknown Soldier. <u>XY/2850.</u>	NO
4	C	17	-do-	YES	123304 Pte. <u>Pte. W. Nelson. 19th. Canadians.</u>	NO
4	C	18	-do-	YES	195459 " <u>R.B. Hawkins.</u>	NO
4	C	19	-do-	YES	213626 " <u>J.M. Maoney. 19th. Canadians.</u>	NO
4	C	20	-do-	YES	412327 <u>Sgt. W.S. Wilkinson. 24th</u>	NO
4	D	18	-do-	YES	748318 <u>Sgt. W.S. McGulloch. 24th</u>	NO
4	D	19	-do-	YES	488970 <u>Pte. C.F. Vickery. 24th. Canadians.</u>	NO
4	D	20	-do-	YES	675270 <u>Pte. T. Gussons. 19th. Canadians.</u>	NO

First Army Press, A.P. &

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

## COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

21-2-21 Army Form

# GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

No. 1. District. (This Report cancels all previous Reports)

REPORT No. 54 SCHEDULE No.

PLACE OF BURIAL NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Commune: -THELUS.

Map Reference 51b. A.17. a.10.75.

The following are buried here:— Exhumation

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erect or G. R. U.
<u>PLOT 4. ROW "C".</u>					
<u>16/ CANADIAN BN.</u>	<u>160741</u>	<u>BROWN</u>	<u>PTE. J. M.</u>	<u>9-4-17</u>	<u>ALL</u>
		<u>UNKNOWN SOLDIER.</u>	<u>(Canadian)</u>		<u>SPECT. "C"</u>
		<u>"BURIED NEAR THIS SPOT"</u>			
<u>16/ - do -</u>	<u>625136</u>	<u>MCGRAY</u>	<u>PTE. H. L.</u>	<u>- do -</u>	<u>- do -</u>
		<u>UNKNOWN SOLDIER.</u>	<u>(Canadian)</u>		<u>+ 1/285</u>
<u>"BURIED NEAR THIS SPOT"</u>					



18/ - do -	412204	CLARK	UNKNOWN SOLDIER.	Pte. A	- do -	- do -
19/Canadian Bn.	213368	HUGHES ✓		Pte. T.	9-4-17	
21/ -do-	59755	O'DONOVAN ✓		Pte. D.	do.	
-do-	636225	BROWNELL ✓		Pte. C.H.	do.	
-do-	636455	SOMERVILLE ✓		Pte. K.E.	do.	
-do-	142530	GRAHAM ✓		Pte. W.	15-4-17	
21/ -do-		UNKNOWN SOLDIER.			9-4-17	CROSSES
<del>21/ -do-</del>	<del>47123</del>	<del>JONES</del>	<del>UNKNOWN SOLDIER</del>	<del>Pte. D.</del>	<del>1454-17</del>	
21/ -do-	675015	HARFIELD ✓		Pte. E.A.	9-4-17	
-do-	444239	CAMPBELL ✓		Pte. D.	15-4-17	
-do-	59296	ELLISON ✓		L/Cpl. J.A.	do.	
-do-	141775	SHIPLEY ✓		A/ L/Sgt. F.	9-4-17	
21/ -do-		UNKNOWN CORPORAL.			15-4-17	
CANADIANS	405295	HIGGINS		W.J. L/cpl	9-	24/23341
						ERECTED
						ENTERED
						SLIPS CHECKED

(6 31 5) W8160-P2723 100,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms W3372/3

## 25. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

1 mile East of Neuville St.Veast, 4½ miles North of Arras, France. (Grave Registered)

## 26. REMARKS.

Approx.Location, Sheet 51b-A.10.c.9.7.

FORM E13  
1054-10M-16-11-16.

NUMBER 160741 RANK Pte NAME BROWN J.M. 649-B-1  
 UNIT 16th Bn NEXT-OF-KIN Mr R J. Brown  
 FILE NO. R.L. 25-13-3666 Canmore  
Alta

DATE OF DEATH

CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH

9-4-17

KILLED IN ACTION.

DATE OF BURIAL

PLACE OF BURIAL

DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.

*Burial Rpt by G.R.C.* Grave No. C.A. 40.

*Special crosses* Location A. 10. C. 9. 7.

*Nine Elms British Cemetery Thelus* 36 C. A. 10. C. 9. 7.

*3 miles N. of Arras* Thelus N.W.A. 11.

*In front of Plot 4* A. 4. 6.

*1/2 mile E of Newville St Vaast* Burial Report by G.R.C.:-

*1/2 mile N of Arras* B R/ 2116/

*Rem. He buried* B R/ 1996/ B R/

*1st Acted G. Rankin*

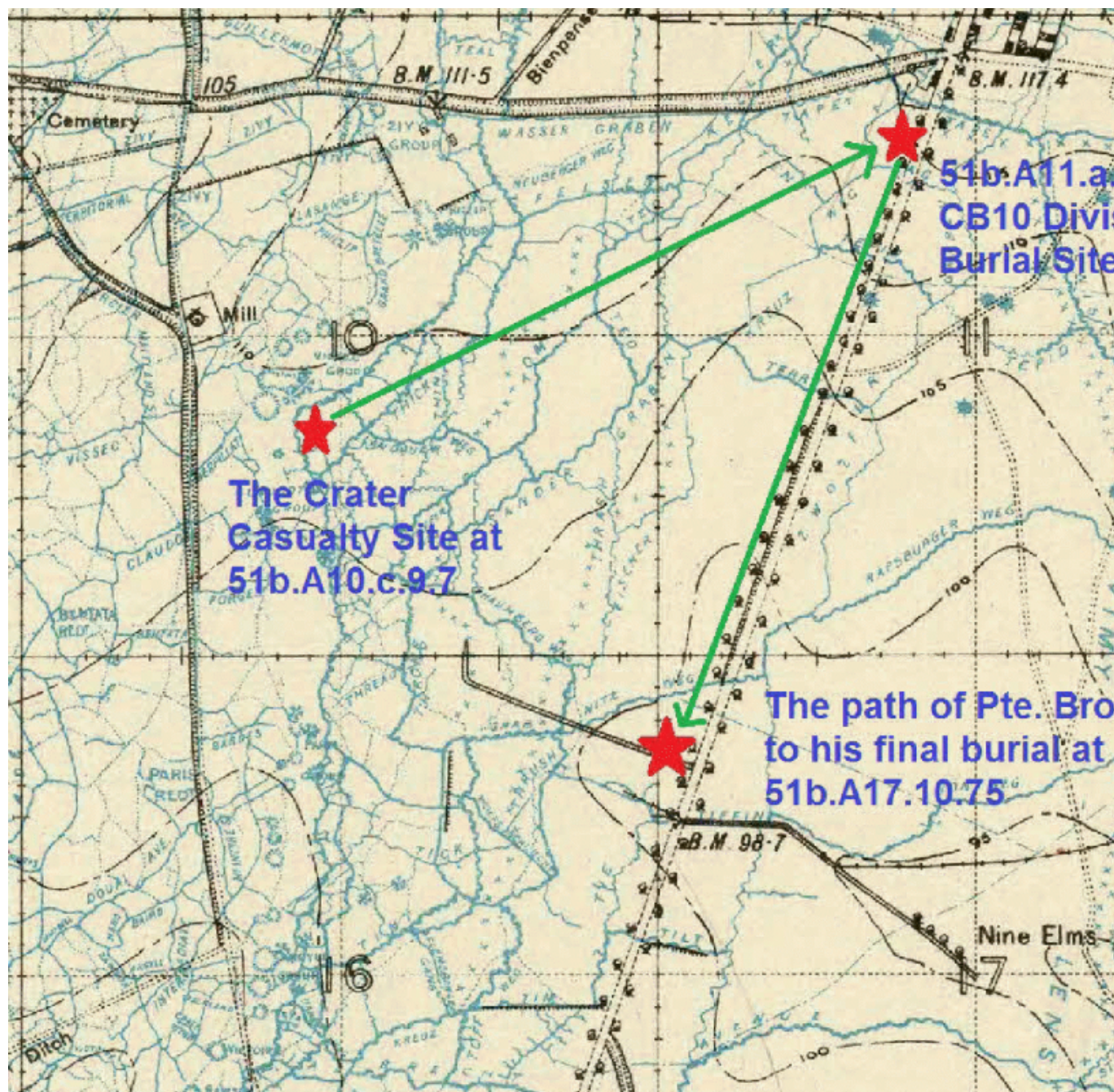
*Authority on R.L. 26. 7a.*

*BR/2247/ B R/*

*B R/2398/ B R/*

*B R/1996/ B R/*





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Dec 31, 2015 4:59 pm**

I can appreciate the time it takes to assemble your material, Richard. Re-reading this entire thread, as I have done on more than one occasion, makes for a great story. Better than any Cold Case or CSI episode I know of!

Every one of the bullet points in your last post are illuminating and convincing.

I am sure the 16th Btn received the same instructions as to burying the dead as the 14th Btn, as the orders came from the Brigade C/O, but I was surprised to see in the 16th diary appendices, this section "Burial of the Dead..." was omitted.

Nevertheless, you confirmed that the 16th had the same instructions - and I will note the 14th diary mentioned only "lightly wounded men" were permitted to return to their starting point with "German

captives." The dead were to be buried and assembled by transport "above ground", so I am assuming what remained of Rue de l'Oeuillette (parallel to Rue d'Arras) would make for a convenient way to move these bodies laterally across the battlefield to where they were eventually destroyed by shellfire in subsequent months. Rue de l'Oeuillette lay a few metres from 51B.A.17.b.1.5 (now the A26 motorway).

I am quite surprised that the progress we have made in only the last few days has cleared up all the confusion I have had regarding this case for the past year - I did not believe this would be possible.

I hesitate to say I am convinced, however, because I do not want to give up hope of finding our heroes.

I wish Mr Christie would address these issues, in this forum, and make me a [born-again, born-again, born-again] believer once again.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Thu Dec 31, 2015 5:25 pm**

Deleted. Incorrect post

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Thu Dec 31, 2015 7:43 pm**

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 618039.JPG>

"Message found in bottle on grave...killed in action 4/4/19..."



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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 9:01 am**

*rlaughton wrote:*

If so, that is great but I doubt that this is something anyone can discuss on the phone. In a meeting, with all the information in front of you for sure.

Perhaps one of Mr. Christie's closer contacts can advise him to read this thread, digest and prepare a set of questions/comments about the data, and then Christie could contact Richard and Ted.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 9:13 am**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!**

Just to finish up on the other 4 of the 5 men in the group with Private Brown, those being the men that were listed to go on Memorial Cross No. 9 who do not appear on the Vimy Memorial. Thereafter an analysis of the YouTube film about the MISSING, as you do need to watch it several times to catch all the points.

### **CSM Frederick Eyden #A/20049**

There is no information in his file about where his remains were found, nor any record of an interim burial and concentration. It appears he went direct to the Ecoivres Military Cemetery 51b.F14.a.8.1

and can be found in Plot 5 Row F Grave 10.

### **Pte. Herbert Joyce McGray #625126**

Pte. McGray is listed as being in the Nine Elms Cemetery, actual grave unknown. There is no report in his COD or WGR as to where his body was recovered or if he had an interim burial prior to concentration. We know from the same records as Pte. Brown that his remains were in fact recovered from the CB10 Burial site and he is now placed as "Buried Near this Spot" Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Plot 4 Row C Grave 2 (GRRF). From that we know that his remains were recovered at 51b.A11.a.7.6 (COG-BR). This would agree with the physical site description of 1 mile east of Neuville. St.Vaast and 4.25 miles north of Arras.

### **Pte. William McMartin #718847**

Pte. McMartin is recorded as being in Plot 1 Row G Grave 29 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, 3 miles north of Arras. The physical description of where the remains were exhumed was 3.75 miles north of Arras and 0.75 miles south-southeast of Neuville St. Vaast. There is no mention of CA40 in his COD file or any grid references. If we go to the COG-BR (2618042) we find that he was recovered at 51b.A10.d.3.5, so he either made it past the Crater to about KEMPFER WEG or his remains were recovered by burial party and taken to that location. That is the site of the Divisional Burial Ground known as CA2 so the later did occur. We do not know why the men were taken to different CA burial sites.

### **Pte. John Cooper #871443**

You will recall from the prior post that Pte. Cooper has been added back to the Vimy Memorial List since it was a CWGC error that had him listed in the database as being from the 19th Battalion. All the rest of the documents say 16th Battalion and it appears clearly that it was a transcription error only (they scanned the records to make the database). A correction notice has been filed. Pte. Cooper's file is interesting as it says that he was KIA by a shell as he reached the objective, however he is recorded down at the crater at 51b.A10.c.9.7 with many of the others. Perhaps that was the 1st Objective? His WGR also refers to CA40.

It would be a significant find for this review to determine the details of CA40 as we have the two conflicting concepts, one presented by the CWGC and one presented by Norm Christie. My next step is going to be to look for supporting information for either case based on what is in the war diaries. Prior to reporting on that, I have gone back again through the documentary, this time with pen in hand to make notes of what is said at what time in the film clip (use the YouTube version in prior post to match these numbers). It is here that I see that we can clearly focus on the inconsistencies in the analysis (NC = Norm Christie, I = Richard Laughton). After reading what is below, please watch the clip to see exactly what NC said so as not to rely on my exact wording.

### **My Analysis of the Documentary "The Missing"**

1. 0:40-04:48: NC says these bodies were never recovered, as they were supposed to have been, based on records put out in 1919. I have not seen any records that specifically say that the bodies from those killed at the crater were to have been recovered. Perhaps this is a general comment that it was the intent of the armies to recover and bury their dead, with which I would agree. Unfortunately, the statement infers that these specific bodies were to have been recovered and they were not. With that I disagree, as the CWGC records say that the bodies were recovered and they were buried in CA40.
2. 9:27: NC provides a general summary of the conditions at the crater with the German MG on the far side and then men of the 16th Battalion being funnelled between the craters, some 20 to 40 feet deep of slimy chalk. In reading parts of the Lt. Jones letter at clip 8:48 there is also the reference to the trenches being knee deep in water. I would conclude from this that the crater would have also contained a significant amount of water. That would make burial in the crater difficult would it not? I can't assume that they just tossed the men into the crater.



3. 11:16: NC says that most of the 16th Battalion casualties were at the crater and that the second group went down on the advance towards Thelus. I see from looking at the trench map that it is about 800 yards from the jumping off point to the ZWOLFER trench and another 500 yards to Thelus. If I am correct, most of the action we are dealing with at the time was in the first 800 yards, so that is where the casualties would be concentrated.
4. 11:47: NC reports that they collected the 44 men of the 16th Battalion and buried them in the crater. I have not seen any evidence that such an event took place. NC also states that they were buried in the crater called CA40. I have found no evidence that there was a crater called CA40 and in the contrary the CWGC provides a clear definition of CA40. In the alternative, the CWGC records the recovery of the 6 men of the 60th Battalion at the crater with no reference to CA40 (COG-BR 2618041).
5. 12:08: NC shows the actual sheet from the CWGC as he explains how they identified the burial locations. Here I have to take issue with the fact that the evidence that NC has in his hand as he is making this claim states the following: *"GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917"*. At no time during this naming of CA40 as the crater, nor at any other time in the show, does NC mention that the description of the crater by the CWGC is significantly different than what he is showing. There is an appearance that the sheet is being shown to confirm that the crater is CA40 whereas the document states the reverse that being that the crater is NOT CA40. I believe NC is then relying on the trench map coordinates of 36c.A10.c.9.7 of a WGR file to say this is the crater grid reference, thus it is also the CA40 location. In the alternative, I would have explained that the grid marks were wrong and the crater is at 51b.A10.c.9.7 and the reference to CA40 is to indicate that is where the bodies were moved to and buried after they were recovered from the battlefield.
6. 12:30: NC is standing in the field, in the centre of what was the crater and says that this is CA40 and he thinks this is where the men were buried in 1917. I would agree that NC could say that he was standing in the centre of the crater and that it was here that many of the men of the 16th Battalion were likely killed, perhaps some even in the crater. I do not believe he can say it was CA40 as he has never yet told the audience that the CWGC places CA40 some 1,300 yards away to the southeast.
7. 12:48: NC correctly states that after the war, exhumation companies came and concentrated the graves.
8. 12:59: NC states that CA40 was apparently exhumed and moved over to Nine Elms Cemetery, so therefore we should be able to go to Nine Elms and find them (the men). I believe that the key word here is "apparently" as that is not at all what the CWGC says in their reports. If you refer back to the CWGC wording you will see that they say *"here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion"*. The CWGC refers to CA40 as they have identified that burial ground (at about 51b.A11.b.40.48) where the men were buried. I have asked the CWGC directly as to whether their description of CA40 is correct, therefore it is not the crater. It may be several days before we get an answer from the CWGC. The answer may also be "that is what our records say and we can not question what was written 99 years ago".
9. 13:12 NC is now in Nine Elms Military Cemetery with records in hand looking for the grave of Victoria Cross recipient William J. Milne. I would agree that Pte. Milne's file states that his body fell in the vicinity of 51b.A10.c.9.7 and that may have been the first place he was buried. The WGR, as do many, link that location to CA40 but what is not clear is if he was buried in CA40 after found at that location. I know from examining the records from other men on the list that many were recovered from 51b.A10.c.9.7 and buried in the Divisional Burial grounds in 1917 and relocated (concentrated) to the CWGC cemeteries in 1921. NC refers to these as places such as CA26, CA 35 and CA40, which at 14:44 he again shows as the crater.
0. 14:48: NC refers to the documents that show where each man is buried. I believe he is referring to where they were buried in the cemetery (GRRF list) as compared to where they were buried on the battlefield (COG-BR list).
1. 15:20: NC is in Nine Elms Cemetery looking for the 44 men. I believe this gives the appearance that there was some expectation to find the grave sites of the 44 men of the 16th Battalion in the

cemetery and so we are to be surprised that they are not there. I would suggest that at this time it would have been appropriate to state, and show, that the GRRF records for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery has a list of the 54 men of the 16th Battalion on Memorial Cross No. 9, as it was known that their bodies were lost and were never to have been buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. (**Note:** The list would have been reduced to 49 as 5 of the bodies were later discovered to be elsewhere. There are 8 additional men of the 16th Battalion on Vimy that are not in the CA40 group.)

2. 16:21: NC poses the question "*but why would they be in the records as transferred to Nine Elms Military Cemetery if that was not what happened?*" I can infer from this statement that NC is referring to the section of the CWGC records that states the following: "*The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including:-*", and then the list of those cemeteries. As I have already noted above, the CWGC knew those men were not located, as they listed them on Memorial Cross No. 9, thus there was no intent to imply they were in the Nine Elms Cemetery. I offer as another example of the same situation as the case of CA39, later to be known as the ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY (not the current Arras Road Military Cemetery). The CWGC also knew that the remains of those men would not be moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery, although they are in the same list, as their graves were destroyed by shellfire. Those men are listed on Special Memorial No. 13 (GRRFs 2617976, 2617977 and 2617978. There may be other examples, I have not checked them all at this time.
3. 16:24: NC asks why the records would be incorrect and then explains the potential for clerical errors. I think we can all agree with those occurrences, many we have found in our own examinations. I would suggest that this would have been a good time to introduce the fact that the CWGC did recover bodies from the area of the crater at **51b.A10.c.9.5** and that they are named and buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery (GRRF 2618041). These are the 6 men of the 60th Infantry Battalion who were killed at that location some 4 months prior to the attack on Vimy Ridge. Their loss may be related to the creation of the crater, I do not know, but the fact that they recovered 6 men lost 4 months earlier from the proposed crater location is certainly compelling evidence that an exhumation party was at the crater in 1919. How could they recover those 6 men and not the others? IF this was CA40, why did they not state that on the COG-BR as they did for many (but not all) of the other CA or CB burial sites?

As I have said from the start, this is just my opinion and not fact. I undertook this exercise to instill confidence in an investment in the project to find our Private Baguley, a soldier of Milton Ontario. I have contacted the CWGC directly on the matter of their identification of the location of CA40. It is entirely possible that the CWGC was wrong and that the incorrect description has been carried forward. It is also possible that it does not matter if the crater is called CA40.

Off to see what we can find in other war diaries about any reference to the divisional burial grounds. Again, my apologies for any typos or bad links in this post, I will check it over again after posting to make sure it is corrected.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 11:48 am**

Richard, I too was going through the COG files this morning (as you did on your post from Dec 29th) and noticed an entry for Pvt Robertson of the Toronto Regiment recovered from 51B.A.17.b.1.5 in the Nine Elms COG files (3rd page in the pdf file on MediaFire). You also found this location to be referred to as CA 19.

I know you just said it may not matter what CA40 is called...but...

Had we not noticed that we now have the commission referring to the same location as both CA19 and CA40?

What do we know of CA19?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 12:10 pm**

Ted, I was preparing this post and did not see yours above. I will look at that now but in the meantime I had been preparing this entry. A very fluid discussion!

On the investigation of the War Diaries concerning clean-up of the battlefield.

The 13th Battalion appears to have been tasked with the collection and burial of the dead, under the direction of Lt. C. B. Adams, Divisional Burial Officer. The 13th was responsible for the whole area, apparently as they were not one of the "Attacking Battalions". The 16th Battalion was on the north, the 14th in the middle and the 15th on the south.

It is clear that their responsibility included the area around 51b.A10.c.9.7 where the crater was located. The line marked for the 16th Battalion also clearly passed over that area.

Here are the two important pages:





be notified later.

# BURIAL PARTY.

20. The 13th Battalion is responsible for the burial of dead between EISNER KREUZ WEG and OLD BRITISH FRONT. LIEUT. J.L. ATKINSON is detailed to supervise the clearing of the Battlefield in the above area. He will report at Battalion Headquarters before dawn and will work in conjunction with, and under the command of the Divisional Burial Officer, (LIEUT. C.B. ADAMS).

# SALVAGE.

21. For the collection of arms and equipment all of the found in the area between the EISNER KREUZ WEG and OLD GERMAN FRONT LINE will be dumped at the junction of CLAUDOT and BENTATA with the OLD BRITISH FRONT. For this purpose, parties of ten other ranks each, "B" and "D" Companies and one officer from "D" Company to take charge, will be detailed. These parties will work back from EISNER KREUZ WEG.

ACKNOWLEDGE.

*Reid*

Lieut. & Adjt.

For O/C. 13th Canadian Battalion  
THE ROYAL HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA

Issued at  
April, 1917.

Copy No. 1-O.C.

2-A Coy

3-B "

4-C "

5-D "

6-JHQ, (Int. Off.)

7-3rd Can. Inf. Bde.

8-Office

9-War Diary

10- " " ✓

11- " "

12- " "

*J.W.M.*

The 14th Battalion, as Ted has previously pointed out in his graphic, was responsible for the area east of where the 13th Battalion was responsible for clearing the dead, described as the area on the west bordered by EISNER KREUZ and on the east by ZWOLFER KREUZ WEG. The later is on the east side of the road heading into les Tilleuls. From this we can then tell that the 13th Battalion was clearing the early part of the battlefield on the west and the 14th the later part of the battlefield on the east. That means the 13th Battalion would have been clearing the area of the crater where the 16th Battalion men were lost.

## PART 11

28

### ADMINISTRATIVE.

#### 1. Dumps.

Divisional Dump A.20.Central.

Brigade Dump A.15.b.10.60.

Battalion Dump A.16.a.10.90.

As attack progresses this dump and Brigade Dump will be advanced to a position in the German Support Line near LILLE-ARRAS ROAD by carrying parties as furnished by the Support Battalion. Further after the attack leaves the BLACK LINE, such dump will be further advanced in a similar manner to the LILLE-ARRAS ROAD and will contain,-

S.A.A.	20,000 rounds
Mills No.5	1,000 grenades
Water	20 cans
S.O.S.	4 sets of three rockets.

Very Lights 2 boxes.

As soon as the situation permits, each half Battalion on receiving word from Battalion Headquarters will, if possible, send back a party of 1 H.C.O. and 1 O.R. to the last named dump to help to bring forward the material to the RED LINE.

#### 2. Medical Arrangements.

Regimental Aid Posts are located as follows,-

Old Battalion Headquarters A.15.Central

ROCADE A.15.b.9.3

SESSAIN A.10.c.3.2

Old Shaft off DOUBLEMONT A.16.a.6.5

#### Collecting Posts.

1. A.20.d.2.5.

2. A.20.d.3.5.

#### Advanced Dressing Station.

1. ARIANE DUMP.



## 2. MAISON BLANCHE.

The wounded will walk or be carried by the Regimental Stretcher Bearers to Regimental Aid Posts. In addition to the regular stretcher bearers each Battalion will detail 20 O.R. to assist in clearing the battlefield of wounded. These will be detailed from the 33% to be left behind.

## 3. Water.

Open well in MAISON BLANCHE.

Well and pump at A.15.d.central.

Water pipes with taps

A. 15.d.10.50

A. 10.e.10.10.

A reserve supply of 1,000 gallons will be stored in tanks and casks in the ELBE TRENCH between CLAUDOT and SAPPER.

150 petrol tins will be filled and placed under guard at the Battalion Dump at A.16.a.10.90.

It is once more repeated that all ranks must carry one filled water bottle.

## 4. Burial of the Dead and Clearance of the battlefield.

(a) Owing to a shortage of commissioned Officers existing Sergeant Lambourne is herewith appointed to supervise the burial of our own and German dead and to clear the battlefield.

(b) The area allotted to the 14th Canadian Battalion is from and including ZWOLFER WEG to and including BISMARCK KREUZ WEG across the entire brigade frontage.

Moving on to the 15th Battalion provides some interesting information as it says they created their own Battalion Cemetery on the Lens-Arras Road, that being the main road going through les Tilleuls. They do not give coordinates but I am sure we can find those from the records here or if not my guess is that Grey Young knows exactly the location. The 15th did their clean-up on April 10th:

## In the Trenches.

April 8th. & 9th. 1917.

& 10th.

Place

Date

Hour

Instructions regarding War Diaries & Summaries are contained in F.S. and the Staff Manual respectively will be prepared in manuscript.

nd Intelligence  
Reqs., Part II  
f. Title pages

# INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erased heading not required.)

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and  
references to  
Appendices

April 8th. Preparations completed for the attack: in the morning, our heavy artillery put on an intense bombardment of the enemy wire. In the afternoon two patrols went out and reported the enemy wire destroyed completely.

April 9th. At 3.00 A.M. our men were started into their assembly trenches and at 4.45 A.M. all the attacking force was in position. At 5.30 A.M. exactly our barrage opened on the enemy front line and our first wave went over in two fine lines. Immediately the enemy sent up a shower of lights of all colors, but his artillery replied very feebly. The remaining waves of the attack followed in good order. The front line & support trenches were taken and immediately a telephone wire was put into a captured dugout, and Headquarters was moved forward. Our first wave advanced under the protection of the barrage and the attack went ahead exactly as planned in the timetable.

At 6.05 A.M. the first objective (ZWOLFER WEG) was reached and for thirty minutes the line rested here and reorganized. By this time the enemy artillery was more active and he placed a light barrage on his old front line. When the attack went forward from here it was found that there was less opposition and the waves advanced with fewer casualties. The second objective (SWISCHEN STELLUNG) was taken and our men at once dug in and reorganized. and the C.C.Battn established his headquarters in a dugout in Swischen Stellung. Lewis Gun Posts were put out in front of our line. At 9.35 A.M. the 1st. Bde. went through and continued the attack. The Battalion spent the rest of the day digging in and bettering its position.

April 10th. The Battalion spent the day in cleaning up its area and burying any dead. A Battalion cemetery was established on the LENS-ARRAS road. In the evening our position was taken over by a Company of the 8th. Can. Battn. and the Battalion moved back to the old British Front Line.

April 11th. The day was spent in resting and in cleaning up our area.

*le E. Bush*

Lieut.-Col., commanding,  
15th. Battalion  
4th. Highlanders of Canada.

15th Canadian Battalion

I was somewhat confused by the reference in the COG-BR documents about the number of 15th Battalion men in CA35. What became more significant was the record of Private White (first one on 2618035) as he was recovered by the 13th Battalion Burial Party at 51b.A16.a.1.1, the location of CA35. I do not yet understand why the COG-BR says the exhumations were at 51b.A16.a.9.8?

On Pte. White's record, they give the exact corner grid points for the 13th Battalion area:

FORM E13.  
1054-10M-16-11-16.

NUMBER 799771 RANK Pte. NAME WHITE, H. S. *Greg = W*

UNIT 15th. Batt. NEXT-OF-KIN Ellen White

FILE NO. R.L. 25. W 2373 White Hart  
Lyfield  
Barker

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	C
9-4-17.	Prev rep. MISSING; Now "KILLED in ACTION".	A. 6

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
	Buried by 13 <sup>th</sup> Can Bn. within the boundaries Burial Report by G.R.C. A 16. a. 1.1. East 2. A. Nine Elms Cem. 16 B. 7. 4. North 2. A. 3. miles W. of Arras. 11. a. 50. 25. West. BR 10798 (Exhumation) 2. A. 10. c. 9. 8. Authority on R.L. 26. 7 a	
	In the vicinity of C.A. 35. A. 16. a. 1.1. 51. B. N. W. 1. 26-7 a. Vol 15.	
	Burial report by G.R.C.:- 3 1/2 miles S of Heuveldt St Vaast 3 1/2 miles N. of Arras. BR/4418/ BR/18 Plot 1 Row 6 grave 18 a. 1108	

That confirms the area where the 13th was responsible and that would have included the crater area of 51b.A10.c.9.7.





# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 4 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 12:36 pm**

I had noticed for Potter in 1.C.26 but I agree that all those above are near the same location but I can not say they are the same. I did send an e-mail to the CWGC to get confirmation on their geographical description of CA40, as they could be wrong. Just to clarify, I was suggesting "*it does not matter if the crater is called CA40*". The crater might end up being CA40 and the other site is CA19 - we will need the answer from the CWGC but I agree that is important. The question still comes back to whether there was a burial of 44 men at the crater? There is no proof yet for either alternative, it is all a mess! It may be that Norm has inside knowledge that the crater is CA40 and that is why it was never presented as a wording error by the CWGC. If so, we need to see that.

***ejwalshe wrote:***

Richard, I too was going through the COG files this morning (as you did on your post from Dec 29th) and noticed an entry for Pvt Robertson of the Toronto Regiment recovered from 51B.A.17.b.1.5 in the Nine Elms COG files (3rd page in the pdf file on MediaFire). You also found this location to be referred to as CA 19.

I know you just said it may not matter what CA40 is called...but...

Had we not noticed that we now have the commission referring to the same location as both CA19 and CA40?

What do we know of CA19?

This is the page that Reg is referring to:

MAP REF. 51b. 1/40.000 FRANCE.

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.**  
EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.  
**Burial Return.**

D.G. RECE  
23 MAY 1917  
1 helms  
54

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial.....NINE ELMS.....

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	C	21	A 17 b. 1. 5.	YES	R.I.P. 3rd, Canadian Bn. In memory of 203685 Pte. E. ROBERTSON. Killed in Action 9/4/17. Toronto Regt. (Regtl. Badge painted below.)	NO
1	C	22	-do-	YES	63268 Pte. G. DAVIDSON.	NO
1	C	23	-do-	YES	210490 Pte. E. KING.	NO
1	C	24	-do-	YES	786408 Pte. F. L. JENNINGS.	NO
1	C	25	-do-	YES	289755 Pte. W.H. MACAULEY.	NO
					N.B. Inscription on each cross was the same.	
1	C	26	-dp-	YES	G.R.U. 2. 766279 Pte. W.H.POTTER. 19th, Canadian Bn. Buried 20th, May, 1917. C.A. 19 51b. N.W. A 17 b. 1.5. Canadian Corps, Killed in Action.	

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

First Army Press, A.P. 4

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

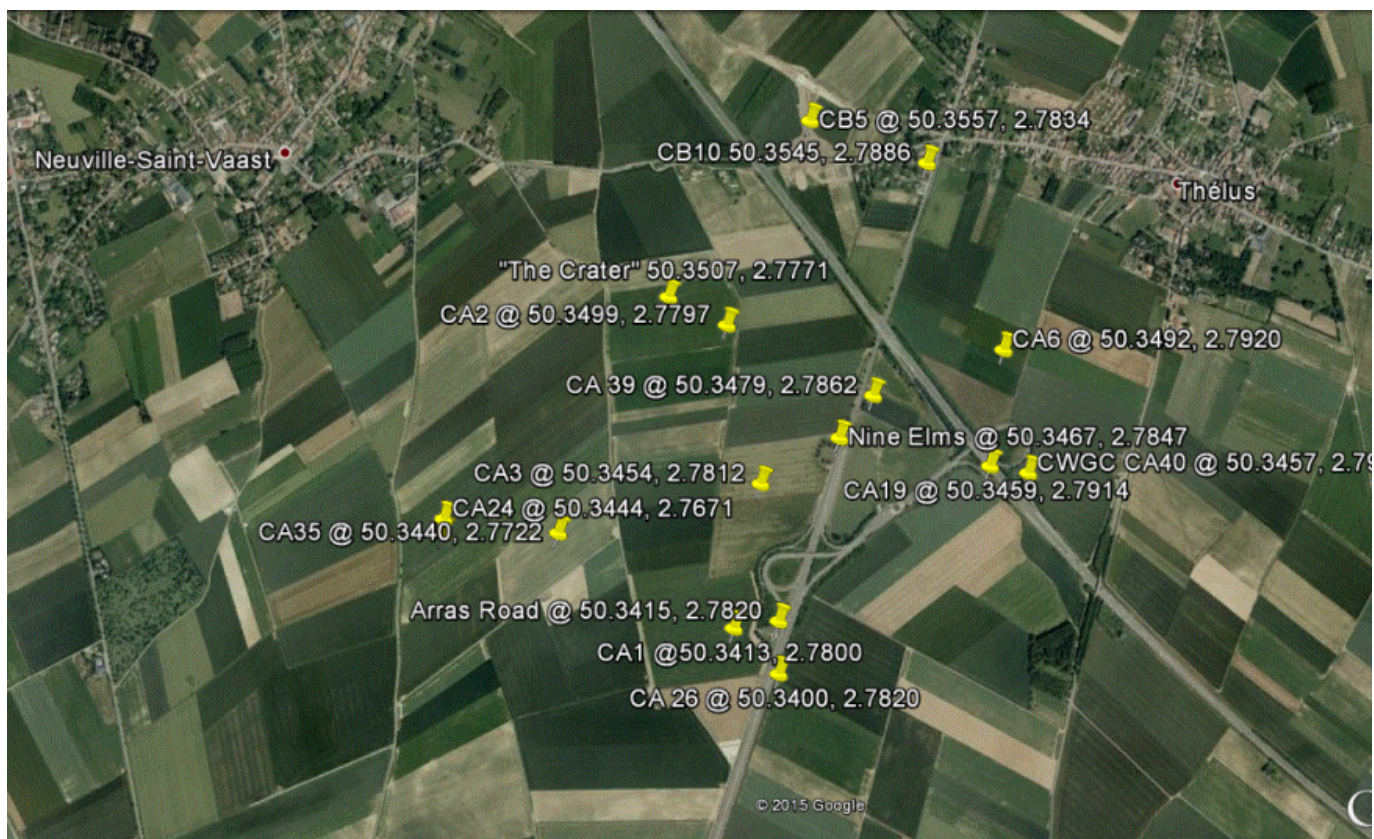
by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 01, 2016 4:13 pm**

Here are all the divisional cemeteries that I have found in the area to date. This shows what the CWGC has as C19 and C40 as different but close. The same applies with some of the others.

I have not found any "rhyme nor reason" as to the numbering sequence - have anyone?





With only the name, no GPS codes:



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jan 02, 2016 8:18 am**

It was a hunt but I finally found the reference to the **broken cross** that Norm Christie mentions in *Sacred Places Volume 3 Page 48* for the Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension. I could not understand why the section on the Nine Elms Cemetery sent us back to Lievin Communal, but now I understand. It was worth the hunt as I also picked up what may be CSM Woods of the 87th who was buried there (UCS Woods).

This is a key piece of information and I don't know why it wasn't presented earlier? Have a look at this sheet (COG-BR 2020936). This is exactly at **51b.A10.c.9.7** the site of the crater that Norm Christie calls CA40.

Remember, however, we do not know if the 13th Battalion Burial Party recovered these remains and moved them to the CA40, where the CWGC says it is located, or if in fact this is CA40 and they were never moved. It is becoming more critical each step to hear what the CWGC says about the location of CA40. If the war diaries are accurate, we would know that this cross was prepared and placed by the 13th Battalion Burial Party shortly after the battle.

Note also that this cross was over the remains of four (4) soldiers that were found at that location, it does not say that it was found over the grave of 44 soldiers. Norm Christie says in his book (pg 48) that *"research shows that Owen was buried with 43 other soldiers of the 16th Bn., CEF in cemetery CA40"*. He states further that *"only four UCS were recovered in 1920 from a collective grave that contained 44 men"*. The cross says the "under mentioned soldiers" and so that would be a significant sized cross to have listed 44 men, as the example shows for Owen that it also listed his rank and service number, so it wasn't just a list of last names. Has anyone ever seen a picture of this cross? That would tell us how big the cross would have had to have been to list 44 men.

What I am still missing is the evidence that 44 men were buried in this location, a crater full of water? But this exhumation report says nothing about a crater, it says it was a grave, perhaps in the field beside the crater. Was the crater filled in by May 1921 when this exhumation was undertaken? If it had been, they certainly would not have found the 4 bodies as they did not excavate the crater.

It is my opinion that the statement by Norm Christie that there are 43 other bodies at this location is an assumption at best. There is nothing in the records that says 43 other men are buried here. If there was some truth to that then would it not be 40, since they recovered 4, one of which may have been Owen? For now all we can assume, unless there is further evidence, is that there were 4 men buried here, they were recovered and concentrated at the Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension. There are 57 men of the 16th Battalion on the spreadsheet I posted for April 9, 1917 for the 16th Battalion, which includes the 4 at Lieven, not just 44. They may be in scattered or grouped graves across the battlefield. To get the real tally we would need to subtract the unknown 16th Bn. men in the local cemeteries for that period. There may be other UCS that are 16th men as well, so we may never know, at least not until the database is complete next year.

This takes me back to one of my earlier points, if they are going to look for these 44 men, or is it now only 40 as 4 of them were found and buried at Lievin, it is likely they are in a surface grave in the fields around the crater. This begs the question - how and when did they fill in the crater and with what? If you presume (*I know that is risky but what else can we do?*) that the crater had a large lip created by the debris from the explosion, I imagine a large bulldozer pushing this all back into the hole. It is now a relatively flat farmer's field and so did all the remains that were buried in that field get pushed back into the crater? What possibly would be left of them at this point in time?

We need a contact in France to find out when the ground recovery process was undertaken. There may be aerial photographs over a period of time after the war to show the recovery progress. I think we need to open a CEFSG Field Office in Arras - any volunteers?



**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Reburials).**

**BURIAL RETURN.**

Name of Cemetery of Reburial LIEVIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY, EXTENSION, SH. 44a.M. 54.b. I5.85.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Were
4	H	I2	5Ib. E.I8.d.8.4. ✓	NO.	UNKNOWN BRITISH OFFICER.	UNIFORM. BELT. &	
4	H	I3	44a. T.22.a.5.5. ✓	"	ROYAL FUSILIERS.	COLLAR BADGES.	
					UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER.	CAP BADGE &	
					III. TORONTO REGIMENT.	TITLES.	
6	A	I	5Ib. A.I0.c.9.7. ✓	"	UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER. ✓	TITLES.	
6	A	2	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
6	A	3	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
6	A	4	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
( A BROKEN G.R.U. CROSS WAS FOUND OVER THE GRAVE OF THE ABOVE FOUR SOLDIERS BEARING THE FOLLOWING INSCRIPTION: G.R.U.2. CANADIAN CORPS. IN MEMORY OF THE UNDER MENTIONED SOLDIERS WHO FELL IN ACTION 9-4-17., and BURIED AT THIS SPOT. No.859684 PTE.R. OWEN )							
4	G	I6	5Ib. A.I7.c.6.9. ✓	YES. (G.R.U.)	772153 PTE. HORNBY. 1ST. CANADIAN BATTALION. K. I. A.	AS PER CROSS.	
CANCELLED BY CERTIFIED REPORT Initialed <u>W.P. 22/5/17</u>				..... <u>G. Bolus</u> ..... Captain. Cmdg. No.2. Platoon. Exhumation Company. D.G.R. & E.			

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial Office.

ENTERED 22/5/17

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat Jan 02, 2016 12:03 pm**

Talk about being teased!

They placed four unknowns in VI.A.1-4, and did not erect a Special Memorial for Owen at Lievin? (he is listed at Vimy)

Besides being confused by the "under mentioned soldiers" comment...why did they only list Owens?

And, if four men were moved to Lieven, I must assume the party did not believe any of the four bodies included Owens.

I need to go through all the War Graves Registry files for these 16th Btn men once again, because in the last few days on the second page of one, I read the GRC had forwarded a photo of either a single cross, or one of these special crosses to a next of kin. In fact, there were two attempts to do so, as the next of kin had moved. Perhaps this hundred-year-old photograph can be found somewhere here in Canada.

**EDIT: I misread - it was almost always noted a letter and form sent to next-of-kin. I re-read all the missing 16th files.**



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sun Jan 03, 2016 1:06 am**

Are the records of the initial CEF GRU now lost or were they passed on to the IWGC and were destroyed by them or are still in their possession somewhere?

The way the inscription is transcribed it sounds most likely to have listed only four or so men, not 40+.

Without knowing any details of this shell hole, its width and depth, and whether it would have had water in it at that point, it would hard to say if it was used as a temporary grave. It would make sense in terms of saving a lot of work digging graves, and because it would offer some shelter to the graves, except in the case of a direct hit from artillery; but how often do shells fall in the same spot, at least at that point in the war?

There would be a lot of loose material around the sides and edges of a crater that could be use to fill in over bodies; also a work-saver.

As for post-war filling in; I doubt there were any bulldozers involved as they were not invented until sometime in the late 20s as I recall. Most likely horse drawn scrapers, harrows and plows. I suspect rain and erosion did most of the filling in, as the millions of cubic yards involved would have taken an army to fill in again by hand.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jan 03, 2016 6:43 am**

*2nd CMR wrote:*

Are the records of the initial CEF GRU now lost or were they passed on to the IWGC and were destroyed by them or are still in their possession somewhere?

I received the following from the CWGC just last week:

*Many of those files were destroyed during the Second World War and are no longer available.*

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Mon Jan 04, 2016 10:05 pm**

And of course the next question is: "exactly what was not destroyed?"

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **JonathanS**

Posted: **Tue Jan 05, 2016 7:48 am**

*2nd CMR wrote:*

And of course the next question is: "exactly what was not destroyed?"

The finding aids from the CWGC archives have been digitized -- they might give some indication of what remains in the files (beyond the material already scanned and used on the site).

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Tue Jan 05, 2016 11:23 am**

Just came across this CBC news report today regarding this project.

Recover Our Vimy Heroes fundraising campaign gets help in Alberta

'To leave them in some farmer's potato field just seems appalling to me,' says historian hoping to raise \$110K

By Allison Dempster, CBC News Posted: Jan 04, 2016 3:23 PM MT

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jan 05, 2016 7:56 pm**

It was more like how much was destroyed...I had read about the "burnt records" before, from what was referred to as the Arnside Street Fire following a German bombing raid in September 1940.

The Great War Project also had a good article on the subject.

LAC states regarding the Brown Binders: ***Important Note: Volumes containing names beginning by Sip to Z have not survived.***

Does anyone know if these Brown Binder volumes were lost in the same fire?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 9:42 am**

I put this aside for a few days to consider other options. I was off on a hunt of the other cemeteries to see if there was a large group of 16th Battalion men. Norm said in the video that he had done the same, looking at the cemeteries, I was looking in all the original COG-BR documents.

For those that have looked at my signature, you might have seen this quotation from the author of the Sherlock Holmes. I think it fits this situation very well:

When you have eliminated the impossible ... whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1890)

There is another common saying that applies here as well:

can't see the forest for the trees

translated: Simply that you have focused on the many details and have failed to see the overall view, impression or key point.

We need to leave behind the philosophy that one of the alternatives before us now is correct and therefore the other one is wrong. It may be that parts of each are correct, or quite possible that neither have any component that is correct. How do we know there is not a 3rd alternative?

Before we try and give a better or alternate answer to the one or two options that we now have before us, let us ask a few key questions:

1. Memorial Cross No. 9 listed 54 men of the 16th Battalion. Of those 54 names we now know that 5 of the men were located, 2 in Nine Elms (Brown & McGray) and 3 in other cemeteries (Eyden, Cooper & McMartin), leaving 49 men on the list which are named on the Vimy Memorial. The total number of 16th Battalion men listed on the Vimy Memorial for April 9, 1917 is 57. That begs the questions:

- What do we know about those other 8 men and does within that knowledge lie the secret to this puzzle?
  - Why were they not included for the 44 men of CA40 or the list for Memorial Cross No. 9?
2. The concept of CA40 being at **51b.A10.c.9.7** "The Crater" was based on the 44 men that were missing. That number comes from the CWGC web site that says when discussing CA40 that "*here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion that fell on the 9th April 1917*". The records confirm what Norm Christie says on page 48 of "Sacred Places, Vo. 3" that 4 men were recovered at **51b.A10.c.9.7** and concentrated in Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension. The cross that was found at that location referred to the burial of the men but it did not say there were 4 men or 44 men, it only referred to the "*under mention soldiers*". It would be pure speculation to say the list was 4 or 44, it might have been 8. The question that comes from this is simple.
- If there were 44 men buried at this location and 4 were found, are we not now looking for 40 more men at this location not 44?
3. We know that the cross that was found was inscribed with the name "*No. 859684 Private R. Owen*". We also know that the IWGC did not make the assumption, as they could not, that Pte. Owen was one of the 4 men that was found at that location. For that reason, his name is on the Vimy Memorial and he was one of the men listed for Memorial Cross No. 9. We have to ask some basic questions about that find:
- If there were initially a significant number of men of the 16th Battalion buried in the area around **51b.A10.c.9.7** (*we do not know if it was 4, 44 or other number*), do we know if all but 4 of these men were collected by the 13th Battalion Burial Party and moved to CA40, as described by the CWGC as "*on the main road by the light railway track*"?
  - Is it possible that 4 of the men were buried at **51b.A10.c.9.7** and a host of others in scattered in individual or group grave locations in sectors A11, A16 and A17?
  - If the CWGC number is correct at 44 buried in CA40 by the main road and light railway track, then is it possible that these 4 men bring to total in known burial locations to 48, as there is nothing to say that the crater at **51b.A10.c.9.7** is CA40?
  - Does that reduce our list from the 57 on Vimy down to 4 men unaccounted for instead of 8 (see question #1 above)?
4. I will need to go back and check all the details, but if the numbers are sequential then there were plans for 13 Memorial Crosses in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Some of these were unit specific and some were mixed. For example, Memorial Cross No. 13 which I understand from Ted's photo is in the cemetery, lists the name of Sgt. C. M. Wood of the 16th Bn., along with 1 each from the 5th and 13th Bn. and 2 from each the 1st and 10th Bn. The questions, which should be easy to answer, are thus:
- How many special memorials were planned for placement in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery?
  - How many of these memorials were abandoned because they were UNKNOWNs, thus added to the Vimy Memorial?
  - How many of the missing men of the 16th Bn. are accounted for in the total of all memorials?
5. We have some of the basic information about the burial parties and duties, such as we have described in the previous posts for the 13th Battalion (the west sector including the crater at A10). We also know that other units had assigned responsibilities, as noted in the case of the 15th Battalion. There must be a mixture of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Division burial grounds in the area, as we have CA, CB and CC codes on the lists. We need to address some issues related to these lists:
- Can we make a list of all the burial locations in the area and account for all the numbers in each category?
  - Were the lists prepared sequentially, so for example do we know that CA40 was created after CA39 (the Arras Road Cemetery area that was destroyed by shell fire and is Memorial No. 13)?
  - Is there any relationship between the lists prepared by the various burial parties and the grave or burial numbers assigned? For example, if we look at the "Casualty Sheet Nos." on each of the E13 Forms (War Grave Registers) they have an assigned number and then a stamped number (Brown: A.636 and 5715; Bradshaw A.626 and 4963; and Milne A.638 and 33868).
  - Do the lists that are associated with the "Casualty Sheet No." still exist on file at the CWGC or were those part of the files that were destroyed in the WWII attacks on London?



6. Each of the units appears to have assigned a Burial Officer, as in the case of Lt. C. B. Adams of the 13th Battalion. I have not seen listings for the others, but it might be in battalion details held elsewhere (i.e. Greg Young and the 15th Battalion). What I would be interested in are things such as:
  - Did the Burial Officers work out of Battalion Headquarters or were there separate and identifiable areas where they were stationed?
  - Were the bodies in April 1917 normally brought to centralized areas by the burial parties or was it the policy to bury them where they fell?
  - Do detailed maps still exist today to tell us where all these burial grounds were located and is that the source of the information on the CWGC web site pages?
7. Based on the CWGC text we know we have a CA40 at "274 metres west of the main road by the light railway track" and a CA39 "on the roadside a little north of Nine Elms Cemetery".
  - Is it possible that the Burial Officer Records might tell us if CA40 was created after CA39?
  - Can we find out from the War Diaries what were the details of the demise of CA39, principally to find out if it was at the time of the burial, shortly thereafter or months later?
  - If CA39 had not been shelled, might have all the remains that were buried at CA40 have been buried in CA39?
  - CA19 and CA40 are relatively close together and further into the front lines than CA39 that was shelled and destroyed. Do we have any information as to what happened to CA19 and CA40 for comparative purposes?
  - Is it possible that CA40 was also destroyed by shell fire and it was omitted from the CWGC web site page?
  - Do we assume just because the destruction of CA40 is not mentioned that it survived? If it did, where is it? Is it under the expressway?
8. What do we know about CA41 as compared to CA39 and CA 40 and does it contain a hidden clue? I assume there are more questions than these to ask, but I will take this as a start. I encourage others to ask their own questions and I certainly don't mind some help digging into the records to get some of these answers. It would be great, for example, for someone to take on the case of the BURIAL OFFICERS - what can you find out about them in general in terms of organization and responsibility and then what details can you find that relate to this case?

The first two items I plan to look at, as I have the database already, is what do we know about the men on the spreadsheet that are not on the memorial cross list and then what memorials were planned and how many men were accounted for on those lists.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 10:57 am**

*ejwalshe wrote:*

It was more like how much was destroyed...I had read about the "burnt records" before, from what was referred to as the Arnside Street Fire following a German bombing raid in September 1940.

🤔 Unbelievable! And unbelievable negligence to have put the Army Records Centre in a warehouse in a densely built up area of London.

*ejwalshe wrote:*

The Great War Project also had a good article on the subject.

This is an extract from the full list, picking out the key items of WW1 interest:

So who knows what else was lost!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 12:06 pm**

From the 7 series of questions above, here is a partial answer to one:

### Question No. 1:

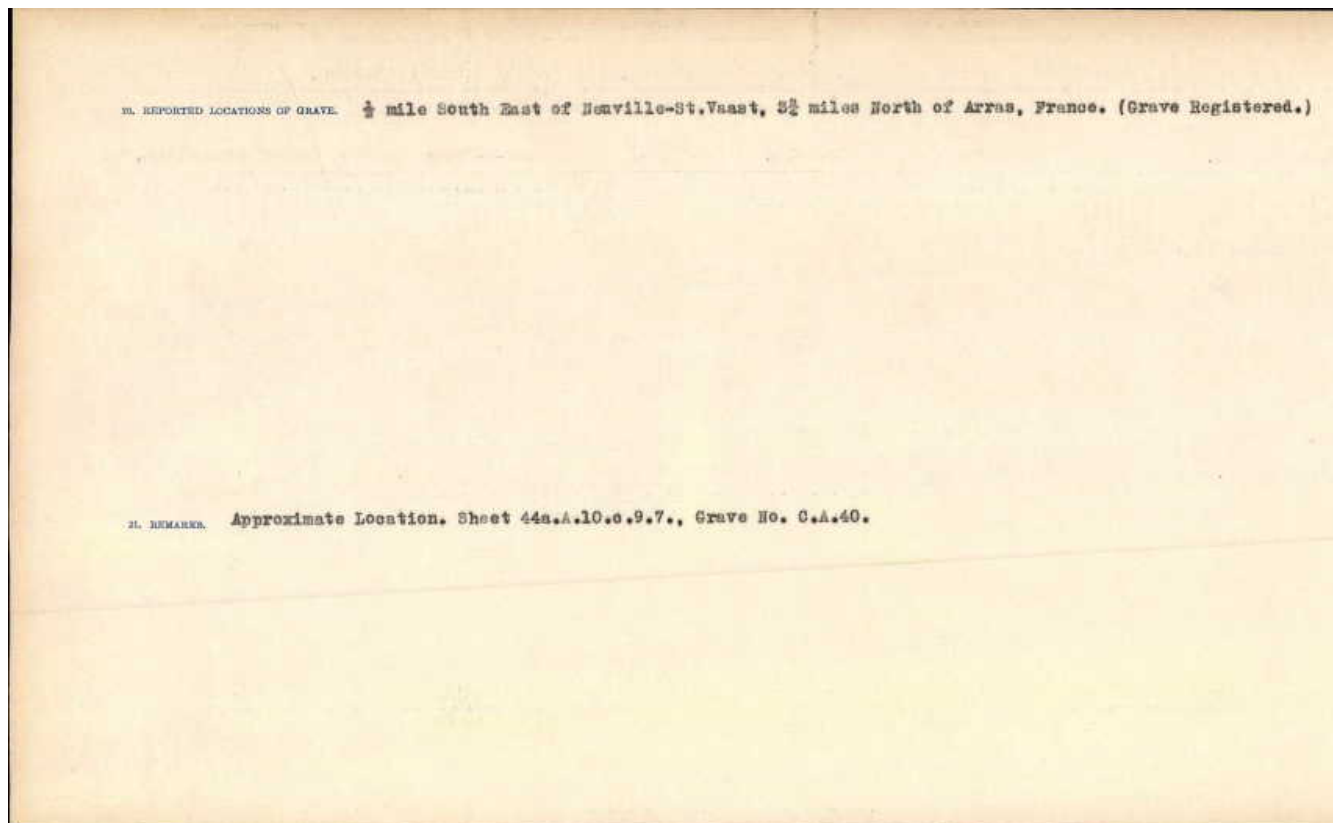
1. Memorial Cross No. 9 listed 54 men of the 16th Battalion. Of those 54 names we now know that 5 of the men were located, 2 in Nine Elms (Brown & McGray) and 3 in other cemeteries (Eyden, Cooper & McMartin), leaving 49 men on the list which are named on the Vimy Memorial. The total number of 16th Battalion men listed on the Vimy Memorial for April 9, 1917 is 57. That begs the questions:
  - What do we know about those other 8 men and does within that knowledge lie the secret to this puzzle?
  - Why were they not included for the 44 men of CA40 or the list for Memorial Cross No. 9?

### Answers:

1. The other eight men have no reference in their file to the crater site at 51b.A10.c.9.7. I have not covered all the others as of this time but it is appearing as if they will all have a reference to the crater location.
2. It would appear that someone went through this exercise in circa 1921, maybe from the original registry from which the E13's were made and recorded only those that were linked directly to 51b.A10.c.9.7.

There are a few interesting items that arose from this part of the search:

- So far this is the only one (Pte. Walter Hooper #736880) where I have seen a direct reference to the 51b.A10.c.9.7 and CA40 on the 2nd page of a COD file. In other cases it just has the reference number. Note that I corrected the map number to 51b from 44a as that is just a common error on most of the forms



However, we know with some certainty now that the E13 WGR came first and that is nearly identical to all the others. It must depend on who made the form what they added:

FORM E11  
1034-1035-16-11-16.

E-13: 20932

NUMBER 736860 RANK Pte. NAME HOOPER, W. H.

UNIT 16th. Battalion. NEXT-OF-KIN Mr. Adolphus Hooper.

FILE NO. R.L. 25 H - 2816 East Haptree  
Somerset.  
England.

65151

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	CAS. SHEET NO.
9-14-17.	KILLED IN ACTION.	A. 637. A 657-

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
X	Grave No. 6.A.40 Loc: A.10.c.9.7. Authority on R.L. 26.7c. Vol 14 36c. A.10.c.9.7. PR/2248/DJR Burial Report by G.R.G. 1/2 mile S.E. of Neuveville St. Vaast. 3 1/4 miles Q.3 Cones. 26/287/28R.8.	

VIMY  
MEMORIAL

- The file for Pte. George Piper #736967 is the only one so far that has a reference to the fact that a letter was sent to the family saying that the grave was lost. Does that mean that at one point in time they did know where it was located? Was it lost at 51b.A10.c.9.7 or at 51b.A17.b.1.5? (Note: I have to go back and see why CA19 differs from the CA40 on the map - as I recall Ted asked if they are the same? I have 2 different grid sets.



PARTICULARS	WRITTEN FOR	RECEIVED
CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH (DETAILED)		
PARTICULARS OF BURIAL		
MAP DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE		
NUMBER OF GRAVE, IF IN CEMETERY		
PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE		
	Letter re loss of grave & Mem Reg. form dec. 26/6/29 to Mrs Susan Piper Foremost	
PARTICULARS	DATE SENT	DATE ACK'D.
PARTICULARS OF DEATH SENT TO NEXT-OF-KIN		
DO. OTTAWA		
MAP DESCRIPTION TO NEXT-OF-KIN		
DO. OTTAWA		
PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TO NEXT-OF-KIN		
DO. OTTAWA		
BURIAL REPORT NOTIFIED TO OTTAWA		
DO. TO NEXT-OF-KIN		
	15/36 with letter to John & Piper Father Foremost Alberta	
	TO	
	16-11-17	
	REGISTER SENT	

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **fatford41**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 3:25 pm**

Originally I was only going to post excerpts from this excellent article. However after re-reading it, I feel the entire article is relevant so forgive me for the length:

### Clearing the Dead

by Peter E. Hodgkinson

This article examines the process of the clearance and burial of the remains of British soldiers from the Great War battlefields; and some of the practical, psychological, social, and political issues that surrounded this.

In all conflicts in which the British army had been involved prior to the Great War, little attention had been paid to the remains of the other ranks, which were generally buried in unmarked mass graves. The American Civil War was a turning point in the history of military graves registration and individual commemoration, and hence remembrance.

Observers such as Bob Bushaway and George Mosse have focussed on the political aspects of post-Great War remembrance.<sup>1</sup> Jay Winter, alternatively, highlights the psychological aspects - the role of remembrance in mediating grief, especially in relation to the missing.<sup>2</sup> David Fitzpatrick describes

Winter's approach as focussing on the "primary function rather than secondary appropriations."<sup>3</sup> This is undoubtedly correct - the motivation for remembrance is psychological. How remembrance is publicly structured can serve political ends.

A neglected area of study is the military clearance of the battlefield and burial, both during and post-war, whose success resulted in the cemeteries that became the foci for remembrance on the Western and other fronts; and whose failure resulted in the memorials to the missing. This was driven not just by sheer military pragmatism but also non-military social and psychological factors. From the military standpoint, identification and burial were matters of both accounting and morale. There was, however, also public pressure both during and after the war to ensure recovery, identification and burial. "These new British soldiers were men whose parents and wives had not accepted, as one of the conditions of a professional soldier's career, the possibility of an unknown grave in a foreign country; their relatives poignantly and insistently demanded the fullest information as to the location of the graves of those who fell."<sup>4</sup>

In one respect this response demonstrated the public's growing awareness of its power and ability to call for "rights" in response to the government's reliance on its acquiescence in and contribution to fighting the war. On another, it demonstrated the increasing psychological awareness of the early 20th century in the wake of scientists and theorists such as William James and Sigmund Freud.<sup>5</sup> The novel phenomenon of mass 'death at a distance' had forced the British people into an encounter with a particular aspect of grief, that complex of emotions so poorly understood in the dying embers of the Victorian preoccupation with the panoply of mourning ritual. This was the human need, when death of a loved one has been traumatic, to have recovery and identification of the body to establish certainty of death, knowledge of how it occurred,<sup>6</sup> and a focus for grief. The process of recovery and identification of remains, developed for the first time in the Great War, has become a central part of official response to mass disaster, peaking in complexity in the last decade of the 20th century.

### The Burial 'Learning Curve'

The British Expeditionary Force was, unsurprisingly, poorly prepared for the scale of its losses and had no effective organisation for dealing with them. In September 1914 a British Red Cross Unit under the leadership of Fabian Ware began to collect information about British fatalities and the haphazard location of graves resulting from the retreat from Mons. Partly in response to public concern about preservation of graves,<sup>7</sup> General Macready, Adjutant-General to the BEF established the unit as the Graves Registration Commission in March 1915. It was incorporated into the army in October 1915, and in February 1916 became the Directorate of Graves Registration & Enquiries (DGR&E). Graves Registration Units became responsible for recording the burial of the dead (and cemeteries), but it was up to the military unit itself to carry out the actual burial.

The massive losses of the Somme offensive revealed organisational deficiencies. Fabian Ware, (now Lieutenant-Colonel in DGR&E) wrote in 1917:

At the beginning of the Somme offensive last year I called at the Fourth Army HQ and saw Gen Hutton with regard to this question of burials. There was no organisation for the purpose of the time and I was satisfied after having discussed the matter with them that it was impossible to establish any proper organisation at that time in the middle of severe fighting. Subsequently the organisation of Corps Burial Officers was established.<sup>8</sup>

In this, as in operational areas, the BEF demonstrated a 'learning curve.' The new roles of the Divisional and Corps Burial Officers became important in liaison with the DGR&E, reaching in some cases a high degree of organisation. Thus, the preparations of the Canadian Corps at Vimy Ridge in April 1917 led to the outcome that: "Within twenty-four hours ... the graves were each marked and recorded, and the organization did not break down even in that sector where a Canadian Burial Officer was killed."<sup>9</sup>

An illustration of this organisation is contained in the 13th Canadian Infantry Battalion Operation Order no. 94 (p.5) for 9th April 1917:10

The 13th Battalion is responsible for the burial all of all dead between the Eisner Kreuz Weg and Old British Front Line. Lieut J. L. Atkinson is detailed to supervise the clearing of the battlefield in the above area. He will report at Battalion Headquarters before dawn, and will work in conjunction with, and under the orders of the Divisional Burial Officer, Lieut C. B. Adams.

This unit's War Diary for 10 April (p.7) records: "Burying and Salvage parties were detailed from each Company, and the clearing of the battlefield practically completed."

Operational orders for the Canadians' next major action at Hill 70, 15-25 August 1917, show increased sophistication. 2nd Canadian Division sent the following special instructions concerning burial to its brigades on 30 July 1917:11

1. The Divisional Burial Officer will be found at M.20.b.6-7.
2. The Forward Cemetery will be at M.12.d.5-7.
3. One grave has been prepared, to hold approximately 30 bodies, at each of the following places. Sains en Gohelle, Bully Grenay, Caldron.
4. All bodies East of the road running north to South through N.8.c.2-0 and N.1 Central will be dealt with by burial parties under the Divisional Burial Officer.
5. Precautions will be taken that bodies mentioned in para. 4, or effects, are not touched or removed by Battalions or other units.
6. Battalions or other units will be responsible for the carrying of bodies West of the road mentioned in para. 4 to the Forward or other Cemeteries.
7. If Battalions desire to send out Burial Parties, they should be ordered to report to the Burial Officer, and on no account will they proceed with this work before reporting to this Officer.

The accounting aspect involved identification. Lieutenant H. Knee at Tower Hamlets, Ypres, in October 1917 described the process that was followed as laid down in SS456 Burial of Soldiers published in August 1916:

Orders had been given that we were to take from their pockets pay books and personal effects, such as money, watches, rings, photos, letters and so on, one identification disk had also to be removed, the other being left on the body. Boots were supposed to be removed, if possible, as salvage was the order of the day. A small white bag was provided for each man's effects, the neck of which was to be securely tied and his identity disc attached thereto. It was a gruesome job!12

In May 1917 DGR&E was reorganised. Prior to this point the whole organisation was directly controlled from GHQ with a small number of Graves Registration Units, supervised by three inspectors; one for the Northern units, one for Southern units, and one for Lines of Communication. The establishment was now increased and control was vested in the five armies, with a deputy assistant director, each army having a mobile unit (commanded by a Captain, with two subalterns, and clerks and orderlies) and one unit for the Lines of Communication.<sup>13</sup> During 1918, across all theatres of war, 94,649 graves were registered and 57,148 unverified burials recorded, bring the total at the end of the war to roughly half a million.<sup>14</sup>

#### Burial and Clearance - Morale Issues

Burial was perceived as necessary for maintenance of morale. Thus, the Reverend E.C. Crosse wrote:

Burials on active service had very great practical importance. In the first place if one had buried a man's body one knew for certain that he was dead. Secondly, nothing is more depressing to the living



to see unburied dead about them. In some areas e.g. at Beaumont Hamel in the winter of 1916 the ground was covered with unburied dead and it became a matter of real military importance that the work of burial should be conducted.<sup>15</sup>

Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser-Tytler bears him out: "The 'Body Snatcher' or 'Cold Meat Specialist' (Corps Burial Officer) ... was most useful in removing our pet aversions, which otherwise might have remained unburied for months."<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, Fabian Ware, reflecting concerns about both military morale and public perception, wrote, (using the word "neglect" to describe the BEF's attitude), on 29 June 1917: We are on the verge over here of serious trouble about the number of bodies lying out still unburied on the Somme battlefields. The soldiers returning wounded or in leave to England are complaining bitterly about it and the War Office has already received letters on the matter.<sup>17</sup>

On 25 January 1917, G.H. Fowke, Adjutant-General at GHQ discussed (perhaps belatedly) "the necessity of provision of some special organisation to undertake burials."<sup>18</sup> He noted that the alternatives were either "To make divisions responsible for the burial of their own dead," or "To detail such parties as can be made available from time to time, e.g. cavalry has been made use of for this purpose." He noted that the withdrawal of a division to refit after heavy losses might preclude it from the first strategy, and that "It is doubtful policy, from the point of view of morale, to use as burial parties troops as may be called upon to fight later."

This was not the first time this matter had been discussed. A meeting between Lieutenant-Colonel Whitehead, Captain Viscount Stopford OC No.3 Graves Registration Unit and others during the Somme offensive had noted:

The suggestion for the organisation of the permanent force met with one very serious objection. It was stated that even when cavalry and other branches were sent out to bury, the men of the units offered much opposition as the feeling was very strong on the question of burying their own dead, and it was thought that the effect of coloured men carrying out this work will be very bad on the soldiers.<sup>19</sup>

Yet 2nd Lieutenant W.N. Collins, the Burial Officer of the 51st Highland Division in November 1916 at Beaumont Hamel, clearly described the unfortunate effects of using the same units in clearance of the battlefield as had carried out the recent successful attack across it. Of his men, "quite a number...were related to the ones who were dead, brothers, cousins, and they of course were very upset, very very upset."<sup>20</sup> Both failure to bury and the act of burying were therefore reasonably regarded as potential morale problems.

Clearance and burial were undoubtedly amongst the most unpleasant and unpopular tasks of the war. Private J. McCauley, recovering from wounds, was attached to one of the new special burial details between August and November 1918. He noted how: "For the first week or two I could scarcely endure the experiences we met with, but I gradually became hardened." He described his work:

Often have I picked up the remains of a fine brave man on a shovel. Just a little heap of bones and maggots to be carried to the common burial place. Numerous bodies were found lying submerged in the water in shell holes and mine craters; bodies that seemed quite whole, but which became like huge masses of white, slimy chalk when we handled them. I shuddered as my hands, covered in soft flesh and slime, moved about in search of the disc, and I have had to pull bodies to pieces in order that they should not be buried unknown. It was very painful to have to bury the unknown. <sup>21</sup>

Of forty-four references in biographies and unpublished accounts referring to this process, 84% were expressed in negative terms.<sup>22</sup> A selection of these includes the following: "It was a terrible job...deeply depressing for the men;"<sup>23</sup> "(The) most ghastly job I ever had;"<sup>24</sup> "...always a gruesome task, disliked by all, and frequently made the hardest sick, but it just had to be done;"<sup>25</sup> "God, how sick I felt;"<sup>26</sup> "I don't know how many we buried. I'll never forget that sight;"<sup>27</sup> "...the most dreadful

experience even I have had ... I retched and have been sleepless since... No words can describe the ghastliness;"<sup>28</sup> "Some of (the men) had been doing this the day before, they were feeling sick and groggy;"<sup>29</sup> "I've thought about it all my life."<sup>30</sup>

Reverend J. Bickersteth described typical post-traumatic symptomatology in the men carrying out clearing:

It is piteous work this collecting of dead...after three or four days in the forward area too, it tries the nerves and causes a curious kind of irritability which was quite infectious - all the party being cross and out of temper, and it was quite easy to find oneself heatedly arguing some trivial point for no apparent reason. <sup>31</sup>

The 1/19th Battalion London Regiment of the 47th Division was used to clear the battlefield after the successful assault on High Wood on September 15th 1916. Reverend D. Railton, the divisional chaplain noted:

Many men who have stood it all, cannot stand this clearing of the battlefield...no words can tell you all I feel, nor can words tell you of the horrors of clearing a battlefield. This Battalion was left to do that, and several men went off with shell-shock...caused not just by the explosion of a shell nearby, but by the sights and smell and horror of the battlefield in general. I felt dreadful, and had to do my best to keep the men up to the task. <sup>32</sup>

Similarly, the South African Brigade was used in burial details at the end of the Somme offensive. One officer observed that for his troops to move to Flanders to fight once more "With the reek of death still in their nostrils...these memories would be distressing to even the hardest...this misuse of fighting troops was cruel and useless."<sup>33</sup>

Yet in this as in other areas, the BEF demonstrated its powers of endurance. Although there is clear evidence that this process affected the mood of individual soldiers and groups of soldiers temporarily, there is however no evidence of longer-term effect on morale.

#### Post-War Exhumation - The Army's Response (November 1918 - September 1921)

The end of the war left uncleared recent dead, isolated graves, and a myriad of accidental inhumations. Three tasks now faced DGR&E and the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) which had come into being on 21 May 1917. The first was to concentrate an estimated 160,000 isolated graves; the second was to concentrate small cemeteries into larger ones; and the third was to locate and identify the missing, estimated at over half a million.

A memo from Major-General J. Burnett Stuart to the War Office, dated 14 March 1919 records the start of the process of exhumation.<sup>34</sup> On 18 November 1918 the Adjutant-General hosted a conference on the matter at GHQ. Three days later exhumation work began in the 5th Army Area and was extended to the 3rd and later 1st Army areas. Volunteers were recruited with extra pay of 2/6d. per day. The Canadians offered to search the Albert/Courcelette area and Vimy Ridge,<sup>35</sup> the Australians followed suit at Pozieres and Villers Bretonneux.<sup>36</sup> Although the British began to search the Aisne/Marne area for 1914 casualties, the French took this over, maintaining responsibility for three areas north of Amiens: Kemmel Ridge, Meries and Meteren; an area just south of Arras ; and Sailly to Bray.

The sheer physical difficulties of the work were significant. On the devastated battlefields much initial effort had to be directed into erecting accommodation and providing supplies. The weather added to difficulties - on 20 January 1919 frost stopped work. Up to this point five to six men were required each working day to exhume each body, transport it to the cemetery and re-inter it. When work resumed on 17 February 1919 nine men were required per exhumation per day. By 14 March 1919 there

had been only 1,750 exhumations (excluding Canadian efforts). Manpower rapidly became a problem - with demobilisation, volunteers began to disappear. An undated memo of a meeting at which both Winston Churchill and Field-Marshal Haig were present, noted the 33,000 "labour men surplus at home who are retainable," but records the decision to pursue the route of volunteers.<sup>37</sup> It was estimated in March 1919 that 12,000 men would be necessary. This was increased the following month to 15,000 Labour Company personnel, 1,500 Cemetery Party personnel and 1,787 DGR&E personnel. By 17 May Major-General Burnett Stuart was requesting 15 more "grave registration squads" from England.<sup>38</sup>

The area of conflict was divided into three areas. The southern area was based at Peronne; the two other areas based on Assistant Directors DGR&E at Douai and Lille. These areas were subdivided further. The process of exhumation was as follows.<sup>39</sup> A Survey Officer selected 500 yard squares to be searched, indicating to the Burial Officer the anticipated number of remains based on the records of DGR&E. These were often inaccurate. In one map square of 1000 square metres "information reported 11 isolated graves, careful search reveals 67. In another area in one fortnight no remains found under 4% of crosses erected."<sup>40</sup>

Exhumation companies comprised squads of 32 men. Each squad was supplied with "two pairs of rubber gloves, two shovels, stakes to mark the location of graves found, canvas and rope to tie up remains, stretchers, cresol (a poisonous colourless isomeric phenol) and wire cutters."<sup>41</sup> A stake was placed where remains were found.

Experience was the only method of knowing where to dig. Indeed, the IWGC noted "Unless previously experienced men are employed...80% of the bodies which remain to be picked up would never be found."<sup>42</sup> Indications of remains included:

- i. Rifles or stakes protruding from the ground, bearing helmets or equipment;
- ii. Partial remains or equipment on the surface or protruding from the ground;
- iii. Rat holes - often small bones or pieces of equipment would be brought to the surface by the rats;
- iv. Discolouration of grass, earth or water - grass was often a vivid bluish-green with broader blades where bodies were buried, while earth and water turned a greenish black or grey colour.<sup>43</sup>

The remains were placed on cresol soaked canvas. For identification purposes, a careful examination of pockets, the neck, wrists and braces for identification tags was required. A description of attempts to identify a late exhumation might be as follows:

Exhumed a grave found in a wood between St Marguerite and Missy. This grave contained an unknown British soldier wearing boots made by UNITY CO-OP SOCY LTD RINGSTEAD 1913. The remains were found in a swamp and had to be recovered from a foot of water. Nothing by which the remains could be identified could be found.<sup>44</sup>

Another soldier was found at Tower Hamlets, Ypres in December 1921: Body reported by one of a gang. This was not identified even partially, though very careful search was made, the boots scraped and coloured silk handkerchief examined. This was probably a 1914 soldier as date on boots was 1914. <sup>45</sup>

Effects found were dealt with as Lieutenant Knee described above. The body was taken to the cemetery and interred under the auspices of the Registration Officer.

Arthur Cooke, an engineer working on Gallipoli (April 1923-July 1924) described the somewhat eccentric exhumation and reburial of Lieutenant-Colonel C. Doughty-Wylie VC:

Within a few inches his body became visible - enveloped in a ragged uniform with belt hunched in a crouched position...my men removed the body from the grave...then they placed his skull at the top of the grave and made a geometric pattern of his bones, even down to the finger bones.<sup>46</sup>



Clearly many men were happy to answer the call to volunteer for this task. The War Diary of the 4th Canadian Infantry Works Company recorded on 19 January 1919 that the request for volunteers was "greatly responded to."<sup>47</sup> The work proceeded without problems. Thus, the War Diary of HQ Canadian War Graves Detachment notes No. 2 Detachment at Courcellette on 6 June 1919 as "in excellent shape, men contented, working away happily," one of several such references.<sup>48</sup>

Captain J.C. Dunn encountered Australians exhumers at Villers Bretonneux in April 1919 and recorded:

Large numbers of troops were engaged in burying or reburying their numerous dead, left where they fell since the historic advance on August 8th 1918. Most of the actual work was done by troops freshly drafted from England, men who had not previously been in France. <sup>49</sup>

Things did not proceed as smoothly with the Australians. Private W.F. Macbeath, one of the soldiers described by Dunn, wrote home on 23 April 1919: "I think they have got the roughest lot of officers they could find in the AIF with this unit, and by jove they want them it is the roughest mob I have ever seen, they would just as soon down tools as not."<sup>50</sup> He continued: "Although we have only been going a few weeks we have had two strikes, we refused to work until we had better means for handling the bodies, had better food and cut out all ceremonial parades." Similarly, Captain A. Kingston reported: "The men were constantly getting drunk... The majority of the men were a bad lot and very inefficient. They were neither dependable nor reliable."<sup>51</sup> Major-General Fabian Ware referred in November 1921 to "Australian officers who should be withdrawn immediately as confusing records and otherwise causing much mischief."<sup>52</sup>

Clearly there was far more indiscipline in troops in France in general after the Armistice than before it, and the AIF would be seen as having more of a problem in this respect than other elements of the BEF. The extent to which similar problems existed in the British Labour Companies is unclear. Captain W.E. Southgate certainly reported discipline issues and financial irregularity in No. 83 Labour Company working at Cambrai in September 1919.<sup>53</sup> This unit, like the Australians, had problems with insufficient materials. He wrote: "This unit joined this group on 18/9/1919 and has only been able to exhume and rebury 190 bodies. This is due to lack of canvas..." He also had transport problems: "There is no Motor Ambulance doing duty with this unit, although one was detailed to report over two months ago." He lacked even the basic requirements: "We have only 30 picks and there is a shortage of shovels (we have about 200 for nearly 500 men)."

It is also possible that this indiscipline was partly related to the nature of task. In January 1920, Brigadier-General E. Gibb, Commanding Officer, British Troops France & Flanders reported that on 3 January 1920 the paper strength of the exhumation companies was 9,000, but the working strength was 4,593 with daily sick parades of 500 men.<sup>54</sup> It is inconceivable that a significant part of this absenteeism was not stress-related. Major A. Lees, commanding the Graves Registration Unit on Gallipoli wrote in July 1919 of the stress of the task: "One of my section officers went to hospital with a nervous breakdown and I have one or two others on their last legs."<sup>55</sup>

Private W. Macbeath described his job baldly in his diary for 15 April 1919: "Working in the fields digging up the bodies, a very unpleasant job."<sup>56</sup> Two days later his simple diary entry encapsulated the pity of this task: "Working in cemetery. An English lady came over to see her son's grave, found him lying in a bag and fainted." In describing this incident in a letter home two days later he wrote, with phlegmatic understatement: "I cannot say I am exactly in love with the job." The writer Stephen Graham, who had served as a Private during the war returned to the battlefields in 1920 and detailed his conversations with British exhumers. He noted: "It is a ghoulis work, but they have become as matter of fact as can be."<sup>57</sup> An exhumers who reports with delight at Ypres that he has found a Brigadier-General missing since 1916 remarks wryly: "It's jolly hard work. But it 'as its better side. Some fellers the other day came on a dug-out with three officers in it, and they picked up five thousand francs between 'em."<sup>58</sup> Yet Graham was aware of the necessity for psychological defence - another exhumers was asked whether after six months of sleeping on the battlefield he saw ghosts:

"The man smiled. He saw none. He felt the presence of none. Imagination did not pull his heartstrings. If it did, he would go mad."<sup>59</sup>

It is notable that the described effects of wartime clearance were emotional in nature, namely depressed mood (and other post-traumatic symptomatology), which was both marked and common, if transitory. The post-war exhumers were more prone to behavioural disturbance: drinking, insubordination, and rowdiness. It would be predicted that the psychological impact of exhumation would be greater on the latter than on wartime clearers because there was no real break to the task, and the distraction of other duties was absent.<sup>60</sup> It is of course possible that the men who volunteered for this work were those who had no reason to return to civilian life swiftly. Some may have been 'psychological misfits' who would be prone to this 'acting out' behaviour. Lieutenant-Colonel E.A.S. Gell, the senior IWGC representative in France after the Army ceased the clearance task in September 1921, gave a fascinating example of self-selection into this work when he described the IWGC gardener (now responsible for exhumation) at Klein Vierstraat: "The gardener here, who was for 14 years in the 1st Bn. Somerset LI... looks exceedingly gloomy, poor fellow...seems to spend his whole time in the wilderness."<sup>61</sup>

The IWGC had a poor view of the efficiency of the way the work was being carried out: "Exhumation Companies, obsessed with the idea that their reputation depended on their concentrating the highest possible number of bodies in the shortest possible time have often paid little or no heed to the essential matter of identification."<sup>62</sup> (Indeed, identification errors by the British at Hooze Crater led to an inquiry where the Australian Major A. Allen accused some British units of "chopping men in halves in order to double their body returns.")<sup>63</sup>

On 27 October 1919 Major Lees on Gallipoli wrote home: "We have identified not far short of 10,000 which is a fair average and many more than I thought possible at one time." His attempts to achieve identification are clear in his letters. On 28 August 1919 he wrote: "Ask Harold for an exact description of a Grenadier Guards button. We have found a button on an officer with a crown on top G. R. and G. R. reversed and then a grenade; if it is Grenadier Guards it is Col Quilter, but no one can identify the button." On 10 Oct 1919 he wrote: "Not absolutely certain about Col Quilter's grave. He is buried in rather a mysterious little cemetery where there are 10 candidates for five graves but if I can't find him elsewhere I will give him a home." Lees appears to be implying that he would 'manufacture' identification to put the search of those at home to rest.

Identification was of course the main psychological preoccupation of the bereaved. Corpses could only be identified by the accompanying effects, and remains found with such were very much in the minority. In April 1920 it was noted that of corpses found with effects, 20% were identified by identity discs; 25% were confirmed by discs; 30% were identified by other methods; with 25% unidentifiable.<sup>64</sup> A name on a compass, a photograph case, a key tab, a spoon or a pipe bowl might reveal the owners name. In France, however, as the task went on, the emphasis on identification fell away. E.A.S. Gell wrote in May 1921 that DGR&E were only undertaking exhumations for identification "when they had the time."<sup>65</sup> Although 600 bodies a week were being recovered at this time, identification was achieved in only 20% of cases.<sup>66</sup>

### The IWGC Replaces the Army

On 6 August 1921 the Colonel Commandant DGR&E certified that with the exception of certain indicated areas, "the whole of the battlefield areas of France and Belgium have been finally researched for isolated graves, both British and German. It cannot be guaranteed that no graves either with or without surface indication remained in the area ..."<sup>67</sup> Some 204,654 remains had been concentrated.

Yet it was clear the task was far from over. On 12 July 1921 H.R. Chettle, Director of Records at the IWGC had noted: "It is... clear that there is as yet no falling off in the quantity of the results of this

work..."<sup>68</sup> The War Office reported on 8 October 1921 that all military staff involved in exhumation had now returned to England. At the 37th meeting of the IWGC on 18 October it was recorded: "Sir Robert Hudson said that if it was known to the public that bodies were being found at the rate of 200 a week at the time the search parties were disbanded, the public would want an explanation."

Questions were indeed asked in parliament by Captain Thorpe MP, and Sir L Worthington-Evans, Secretary of State for War was forced into the following response reported in the Times on 10 November 1921 to address "public anxiety": Since the Armistice the whole battlefield area in France and Flanders has been systematically searched at least six times. Some areas in which the fighting had been particularly heavy, were searched as many as 20 times. In the spring of 1920 the work was easy and rapid owing to the number of surface indications, but since then in the cases of, approximately, 90% of the bodies found, there was no surface indication. These invisible graves were found by various local indications recognised by the experience of the exhumation parties. It is probable that a number of these invisible graves have you not yet been found, and are likely to be brought to light during the work of reconstruction and in the opening up of areas at present inaccessible owing to the thickness of undergrowth, the marshiness of the land etc. The searching, however was most thorough, as the whole the battlefield area was divided up into map squares, to which a platoon under a subaltern was allotted. The actual search party usually consisted of about 12 men under a senior non-commissioned officer. These parties systematically searched the whole of the surface of the areas.<sup>69</sup>

The public remained unconvinced, as well they might with approximately 300,000 dead unaccounted for. On 17 March 1922 a Mr Chapman, residing in Mailly Mallet wrote to James Gillies, Minister of Lesmahagon, whose son was missing at Serre: "Today a Belgian found a body and reported, on his being questioned he admitted that an old cigarette case was there but had been thrown away. Well, I threatened and frightened him and at midday it is produced and inside it is a photo of the poor fellow with his name and address." On 26 May 1922 he wrote again of "Hundreds if not thousands" of British bodies being exposed. He deemed the two franc reward inadequate when the Frenchman might lose seven or eight francs walking seven kilometres to inform someone of the discovery of remains. He wrote of "The searching and desecration of the dagos who are doing the work of clearing the ground... Last week I pointed out some bodies with the result that an action was immediately taken, identifications secured at least two cases... The whole circumstances are a disgrace to our nationhood." Ghillies then wrote to Captain Elliot MP: "I visited the Somme district in November last. The ground for the most part lay as at the Armistice - & thousands of unknown British soldiers are being brought up as the work of restoration proceeds."<sup>70</sup>

A memo from the Vice Chairman IWGC on 5 May 1921 concluded that "Search might usefully be continued" in the following areas:<sup>71</sup>

- i. Passchendale - Becelaere - Gheluvelt - Comines - Messines - Zillebeke
- ii. Neuville St Vaast - Arleux - Oppy - Gavrelle - Fampoux - Roclincourt
- iii. Martinpuich - Geudecourt - Les Boeufs - Combles - Guillemont - Montauban

It might be considered that this roughly corresponds to the whole area of BEF major operations from July 1916 to August 1918.

It was clear to Lieutenant-Colonel E.A.S. Gell, the senior representative of the IWGC in France, that some areas had never been searched. He noted on 16 December 1921: "To Bourlon Wood to see the condition of it, as report goes that large numbers of bodies are still missing there. We worked our way through part of the wood, but soon the tangled undergrowth became so thick that progress was impossible. Brambles grow in such profusion, that I give it as my opinion that no systematic search is possible. I do not believe that wood has ever been searched properly let alone re-searched."<sup>72</sup> Four days later he noted the same at St. Eloi: "Patches of country are left untouched."

The reasons for areas remaining uncleared appear as follows:

- i. The weather conditions at the time of year the areas were searched were unfavourable;
- ii. The ground was in too broken a condition;



- iii. The area was heavily wooded or excessively marshy, and hence difficult to access;
- iv. British volunteer manpower for the task diminished;
- v. Private owners, quickly reinstating themselves, made difficulties for access and asked to be allowed to level their own properties;
- vi. "The money has been exceeded."<sup>73</sup>

It is an inescapable conclusion that definition of the army's task as ended in 1921 was arbitrary. Worthington-Evans's statement gave the impression that some turning point had been reached. It had not. The withdrawal of the army was more a response to diminishing manpower, problems on the ground, and finance. The task was simply passed to the IWGC. In April 1922 E.A.S. Gell reported nine gangs of 30 men and 20 gangs of 10 men working at Ypres; 150 men "(mostly Poles) working under an intelligent French foreman,"<sup>74</sup> at Neuve Chapelle, and 25 gangs working south of the Vermelles-Hulloch Road and on Hill 70 at Loos, this being merely 3 of the 8 areas still being searched. As time went on, the IWGC relied more and more on local reporting as ground was levelled, drainage dug, and roads created. Between 1932 and 1936 4,079 bodies were recovered (7% in Belgium, 93% in France). Fifty-two per cent had been found by metal searchers; 30% by farmers/others; 18% by French government search parties.<sup>75</sup> The figures for body recovery alone indicate the incompleteness of the task in 1921. 28,036 bodies were found between 1921 and 1928 (with 25% identification),<sup>76</sup> and approximately a further 10,000 up to 1937.

It was not unreasonable that the transfer of responsibility should have happened sooner or later. The government was not shirking its financial burden as it was, of course, financing the IWGC. That it should have sought to dress this as a task nearly completed (when all involved know this was not the case) was not, perhaps, surprising. Those who argue that the idealisation of the dead (through the developing rituals and memorials on which remembrance focussed) served the inhibition of criticism of Britain's social and political structure must acknowledge that if the dead were consciously being manipulated in this way, the abandonment of the formal search for them was not something likely to support this inhibition. If the decision to downgrade the national effort to recover the war dead was made on a judgement that the public were sufficiently distant from the war and distracted by ritual and monument for this to pass with less resentment, the evidence for it has yet to be found. The evidence suggests it was based on far more prosaic matters such as manpower, local conditions, finance, and, perhaps, simple loss of impetus.

#### Notes:

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J.M. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

D. Fitzpatrick, <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/War/...trick.html> (accessed 12 September 2006). *The Times War Graves Number* (10 November 1928) p.vi.

William James (1842-1910) is widely regarded as the 'father' of scientific psychology. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), founder of psychoanalysis, published his seminal paper on bereavement, Mourning and Melancholia, in 1917 partly in response to the emotional climate created by the mass death of the Great War.

This need was serviced by the letters from officers or comrades to next of kin. Joy Damousi's study of comrades' letters [*The Labour of Loss* (Cambridge: University Press, 1999)] notes: "In meticulously documenting the details of death, soldiers took care to describe the particular circumstances of a special loss..." (p.11) These details gave great benefit to bereaved families who had a tremendous appetite for detail. The letters might describe the respect in which the dead person was held: "We lost a cheery good pal and staunch comrade and understand your deepest feelings" (p.12). They might describe what happened prior to death: "I was with Allan during the afternoon & he was in the best of spirits & was looking forward (to) the charge" (p.12). They might detail the mode of death: "A shell

fragment penetrated the back of his head, death would be instantaneous... Your son was not disfigured & had a smile on his face..." (p.14). Lastly the idea was always conveyed of a noble death or the individual having died with duty done, e.g. "Remember that your son was a hero."

P. Longworth, *The Unending Vigil* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2003) p.6.

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N. Fraser-Tytler, *With Lancashire Lads and Field Guns in France* (Manchester: John Heywood, 1922)

quoted in A. Simpson *Hot Blood and Cold Steel* (Bath: Tom Donovan, 1993) p.107-8.

F. Ware to DGR&E, CWGC SDC 60/1 Box 2033.

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W.N Collins quoted in R. van Emden & S. Humphries *Veterans* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 1998) p. 130-1.

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P.E. Hodgkinson *Human Remains on the Great War Battlefields* (Unpublished MA Dissertation, Birmingham University, 2006).

Lieutenant P. King quoted in L. McDonald, *They Called It Passchendaele*, (London: Penguin, 1993) p. 210.

Private B.V. Sporton IWM DOCS 01/52/1.

T. Brookbank IWM DOCS 99/13/1.

Private R. Gwinnell IWM DOCS 01/38/1.

Corporal J. Hoyles quoted in L. McDonald, *Somme*, (London: Penguin, 1993) p. 113.

Padre McKenzie quoted in P.H. Liddle, *Men of Gallipoli*, (Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 1976) p. 159.

Lieutenant E.B. Lord IWM DOCS quoted in P. Hart *The Somme*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005) p. 217.

Lieutenant E.B. Lord quoted in P. Hart *The Somme* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005) p. 217.

Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p. 274.

D. Railton, IWM DOCS 80/22/1.

Quoted in B. Nasson 'South Africans in Flanders: Le Zulu Blanc,' in P.H. Liddle ed. *Passchendaele in Perspective* (London: Leo Cooper, 1997) p. 295.

CWGC WG 1294/3 Pt. 1 Catalogue No. 268 Box 1082.

1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Canadian Infantry Works Companies were pressed into service. Two companies of the Canadian War Graves Detachment were formed as the Works Companies demobilised, each 500 strong, from volunteers in England.

1100 men were provided.

Exhumations and Cemeteries CWGC WG 1294/3 Pt 1 Catalogue No. 268 Box 1082.

WG 1294/3 Pt.2 Cat. No. 269 Box 1083.

See N. Christie, *The Canadians on the Somme* (Ottawa: CEF Books, 1999) p. 57-61.

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Revised Instructions - Records Branch (Undated ?1922), CWGC WG 1294/3 Pt. 1 Cat. No. 268 Box 1082.  
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E.A.S. Gell Letter 11/5/1921 GWGC WG 1294/3/3 Cat. No. 270 Box 1083  
Lieutenant-Colonel J Dick-Cunningham Letter 3/8/1921 1921 GWGC WG 1294/3/3 Cat. No. 270 Box 1083.  
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Correspondence CWGC WG1294 Pt. 1 Cat. No. 158 Box 1082.  
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Found on-line at:

<http://www.vlib.us/wwi/resources/clearingthedeath.html>

Cheers

Bob

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 3:51 pm**

**Question No. 4:**



4. I will need to go back and check all the details, but if the numbers are sequential then there were plans for 13 Memorial Crosses in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Some of these were unit specific and some were mixed. For example, Memorial Cross No. 13 which I understand from Ted's photo is in the cemetery, lists the name of Sgt. C. M. Wood of the 16th Bn., along with 1 each from the 5th and 13th Bn. and 2 from each the 1st and 10th Bn. The questions, which should be easy to answer, are thus:

- How many special memorials were planned for placement in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery?
- How many of these memorials were abandoned because they were UNKNOWNs, thus added to the Vimy Memorial?
- How many of the missing men of the 16th Bn. are accounted for in the total of all memorials?

(You can see any of the pages by entering the number in place of the "999999" in this URL: <http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 999999.JPG>)

Special Memorials Listed: (in order they appear in the GRRF Listings)

- 2617967: **Special Cross (no number)** - for Brown, McGray, Clark and Heard was changed to gravestones and "Buried Near this Spot" (interesting that Heard is in 4.C.16 as "Buried Near this Spot" but there are no neighbours with that designation - can not explain that one!)
- 2617968: **Cross No. 1** (cancelled) - in memory of Officers, NCO's and Men of the 10th Bn. (particulars removed)
- 2617968, 2617969, 261770: **Cross No. 2** (cancelled) - 15th Battalion "48th Highlanders"  $22+31+2 = 55$  men (may include the 39 men in CA39 and 23 men in CA35)
- 2616970: **Cross No. 3** - Sgt. Dayton #700544, 43rd Battalion "Cameron Highlanders" (appears not to have been cancelled but it was as the name is on the Vimy Memorial)
- 2617970, 2617971: **Cross No. 4** (cancelled) - 13th Battalion "Royal Highlanders"  $19+9 = 28$  with some adjustments apparently made but not clear.
- 2617971: **Cross No. 5** (cancelled)- Officers, NCO's and Men of the 5th Battalion (no names listed)
- 2617971: **Cross No. 6** - L.Cpl. Symington, 9th Royal Scots (appears not to have been cancelled)
- 2617971: **Cross No. 7** - Pte. Harrop, 1st Battalion (not shown as cancelled but was as on Vimy Memorial)
- 2617971, 2617972: **Cross No. 8** - 1/4th Seaforths -  $6+5-1 = 10$  men (not marked as cancelled)
- 2617972, 2617973: **Cross No. 9** (cancelled) - 16th Battalion "Canadian Scottish"  $23+31 = 54$  men, 5 later found in other cemeteries, other 49 now listed on Vimy Memorial
- 2617974: no page with that code, no idea where they went?
- no **Special Crosses listed by numbers 10, 11 or 12** (were they previously on page 2617974?)
- 2617975: **Special Cross (no number)** - Cpl. Stuart #925072, 5th Battalion ("Believed to Be" - not on Vimy Memorial)
- 2617976, 2617977, 2617978: **Special Memorial Cross 13** - 44 Canadian Soldiers from CA39, graves destroyed by shell fire ( 2 of 1st Bn., 2 of 10th Bn., 1 of 13th Bn., 1 of 16th Bn., 38 of 15th Bn.)

The end result appears to be that all Memorial Crosses to men who were missing and with no known or suspected burial were cancelled, as their names were moved to the Vimy Memorial (as expected). Those that had graves that were known to exist and were destroyed remained (CA 39 - destroyed by shell fire). The four that are classed as "Buried Near this Spot" remain in 4.C.1, 4.C.2 4.C.3 and amazingly 4.C.16 but as actual grave stones and not Special Memorials. Cpl. Stuart #925072 of the 5th Battalion is now recorded as Special Memorial No. 1 in the CWGC data base as "Believed to be buried in this Cemetery".

Based on this review, which needed to be done just to make sure, there are no graves that are left as unknown that could contain the missing men and all the Special Memorials appear to now comply with the standards. It would appear that there are sections of this cemetery that have "trench burials" (i.e. the stones are close together) as well as those that are individual graves. There were also a large

number of French graves that were removed by the Civil Authorities. As a precaution, I would want to see a GPR study of the cemetery, in the "now empty areas where the French were removed" as well as along the perimeters, just to make sure there are not "other trench burial sites" that might contain the men of CA40.

Please let me know if you see any omissions or weaknesses in this analysis - on to the next question!

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

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## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 5 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 06, 2016 4:33 pm**

Jumping ahead a bit to Question No. 8, this may be of interest:

8. What do we know about CA41 as compared to CA39 and CA 40 and does it contain a hidden clue?

First thing is I think you need to see the page for CA41, so I have shown it in this post.

There are a few key items to note:

- This is CA41 so it may have come after CA39 and CA40 - as of this time we do not know that answer but it may be very important to know if they were sequential.
- In the 3rd column note that the bodies were recovered in area **51b.A10.c.3.2** where the 13th Battalion was tasked with clearing the battlefield and burying the dead. It is also close to where the crater was located at **51b.A10.c.9.7**, so casualties early in the attack.
- In the 6th Column note that the 13th Battalion (I presume based on their assignment) **DID NOT** bury the dead where they found them, rather they collected the remains and buried them much further away (about 1,100 yards to the southwest) in a new grave site designated CA41 at **51b.A15.b.3.0**. They did the same thing for the sole person in 1.G.15. Obviously they were not burying the dead where they fell.
- We now know that the remains were being relocated to off-site burial areas so we need to apply this to the remains at **51b.A10.c.9.7** at the **crater**. Where did they take those for burial?



REF. MAP 51b. 40000

# CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

## Burial Return.

D.G. 2  
RECEIVED  
23 MAY 1918  
1 helms  
54/16E NUM

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial NINE ELMS.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	E	1	A 10 c 2.2.	YES	G.R.U. Canadian Corps 150154 Pte. B.H. Hudson 4th. Canadian Bn. Killed in Action between 9th. & 12th. April. 1917 buried at this spot. @ A 24 France A 15b3.2.	NO
			A 10 c 3.2.	YES	Canadian Corps. In memory of the undermentioned Soldiers who fell in Action 9th. April 1917 and are buried at this spot. CA 41 France	NO
1	E	2	-do-		A 15 b 3.0. G.R.U.2. 3rd. Machine Gun Corps. 174256 Pte. J. Duffey.	
1	E	3	-do-		429183 " A. Cameron.	
1	E	4	-do-		420684 " M. A. Stanton.	
1	E	5	-do-		488805 " G. Kensman.	
1	G	13	A 17 b. 8.0.	NO	NIL	NO
1	G	14	-A 10 c 6.3.	YES	NIL	NO
1	G	15	A 10 c 1.2.	YES	G.R.U.2. Canadian Corps. Pte. Gadvallader 7th. Canadian Bn. K. in A. Buried 10th. April. 1917. 51b A 15 b 8.2.	NO
1	G	16	A 10 c 89.00	YES	9487 Pte. Mews G.R.U.12. Canadian Regt.	NO
1	G	17	A 10 c 85.01	YES	NIL	NO

First Army Press, A.P. & S

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jan 07, 2016 8:50 am**

This is an extra insert and not directly related to the list of questions, however it needs to be included in the overall evaluation of the men and the cemeteries.

The War Diary of the 2nd Infantry Brigade reports on the construction of a cemetery (that is not on the other lists) that was constructed on April 20th for men of the 7th Battalion (4 Officers and 70 Other Ranks).

**Note:** I have put copies in PDF booklet format, any of the war diaries for April 1917 for this evaluation:

- MediaFire Folder: W4 War Diaries

It is located at **51b.A16.d.90.15** (GPS 50.3401, 2.7836) which is close to CA26. Oddly, they say it is on the west side of the Lens-Arras Road but in fact that spot is on the east side of the road in a field across from the current Arras Road Cemetery.

I ran a spreadsheet on the 7th Battalion from April 9th to 19th (inclusive) and that has 90 listings (5 Officers and 85 Other Ranks). Of those 13 are on the Vimy Memorial so were not buried there, which leaves 77 men total. We already know that there are 3 men of the 7th Battalion in Battlefield Cemetery CA3 (Francis, Rhodes & Willis) that went to Nine Elms Cemetery so the numbers match exactly at 74.

The spreadsheet for this group is here: 7th Bn. April 9-19 1917

I have no idea why, but those men were later concentrated in a number of different cemeteries. You

would think they would all go to the same and nearby cemetery?

There was no mention of this cemetery on the CWGC page for Nine Elms but it may be mentioned elsewhere. I do not know what the number is but it would be something of the form "CA\_".

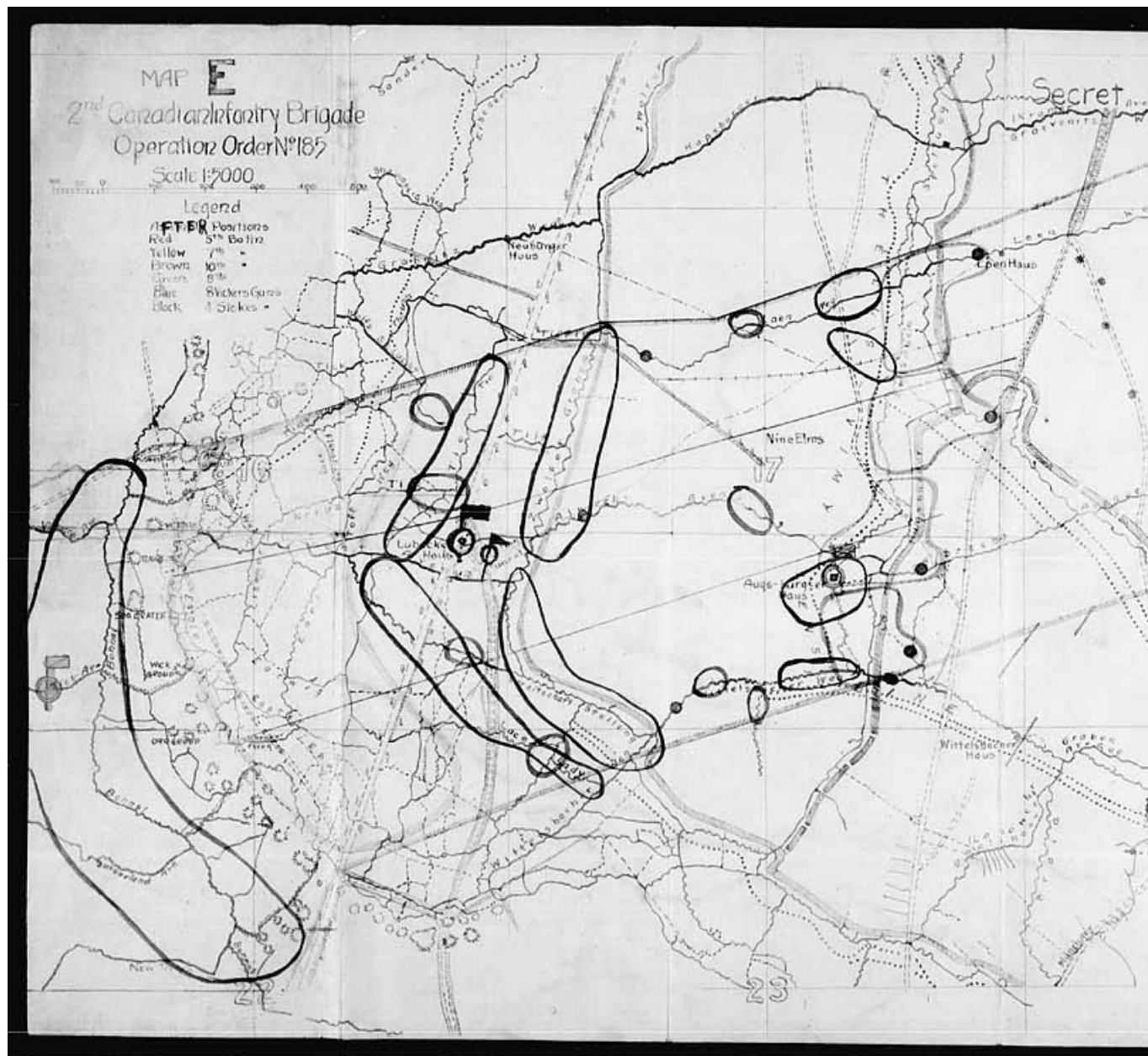
See the last section on this page (bottom entry). It is not what I was looking for exactly, as I am looking for two items:

1. any mention of an attack at the vicinity of the CWGC cemeteries at CA39 that destroyed the graves
2. any mention of a mass burial at the location of CA40 given by the CWGC

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.			<b>WAR DIARY</b> OR <b>INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.</b> (Erase heading not required.)	
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	
	April 15th. 1917.		Weather: Wind North by North-West. Overcast in morning, but clearing by night-fall. Occasional showers. Gas Alert on. WILLERVAL was shelled intermittently throughout the day, also the captured gun emplacements in FAREBUS WOOD, At FAREBUS STATION and in BOIS de la VILLE. Casualties: 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion - Killed O.R. 10, Wounded 23, Missing 1 killed, 1. Reinforcements: 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion 3 Officers and 21 Other Ranks.	
	April 16th. 1917.		Operation Order 189, issued today, is attached as an appendix thereto. Situation: Quiet. Weather: variable. Wind: North-West. Brigade Headquarters moved to NEUBURGER HAUS, this morning.	
	April 17th. 1917.		Weather: Cold with rain. Situation: Normal. 800 men from Brigade Units are required by Division to work on Communications in the AM tomorrow and the 19th instant.	
	April 18th. 1917.		Situation: Normal. Weather: Raw and Cold, with occasional rain and sleet. Units of the Brigade have elected to remain in their present dugout positions, rather than move to tents at MAISON BLANCHE for 24 hours.	
	April 19th. 1917.		Situation: Normal. Weather: Changeable. 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade report that their patrols went out on the Right during the night, and examined wire about B.5.a. It was 4 or 5 feet high, and thickly strung. Wire was damaged, but is yet impassable to Infantry. Mine appears to be strongly held. Instructions regarding the proposed attack upon the ARLEUX - CITY Line, were issued today. A Copy of these instructions, and amendment thereto, is included under this cover.	
	April 20th. 1917.		Weather: Fine. Wind: North-East. The 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion has established a Battalion Cemetery West of the LENS-ARRAS Road at A.16.d.90.15, in which 4 Officers and 70 Other Ranks, killed in the recent action are buried. Incendiary shells were directed against THELUS about 11.00 p.m. A fire broke out in the vicinity of the LENS-ARRAS Road. Throughout the day, shrapnel was burst along the line of the LENS-ARRAS Road. These shells appeared to be fired from an extreme range.	

2353. Wt. W2544/1454 7009000 -5/15 D. D. & L. A.D.S.S. Form No. C. 211b.

From the 2nd Brigade map, we know it was this brigade that was directly involved in the area where CA39 and CA40 were located (as per CWGC). If there was artillery that destroyed CA 39 it would have been directed at them! You can see the 17 and the Nine Elms in the centre of this map.



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Thu Jan 07, 2016 10:44 pm**

Another article.

Calgary Sun - Canadian historian on a mission of respect for First World War soldiers buried in a potato field (Michael Platt, 06 January 2016)

The project fundraising: NC is posting updates (36 so far) on his fundraising site, (select updates to view) here. I see that one week ago he made an update using a photo I posted on the CVWM years ago for Pte. W. F. Dickson, 16th battalion. If you look at "activity" (179 posts), he is responding with comments to the notifications that a donation has been made. The donors are often posting their reasons for making a donation.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jan 09, 2016 4:11 pm**

The publicity is working for Norm as I just checked and he has jumped past \$25,000! Good for him and his project! I have done my best but I can find no information in support of this claim:

***Norm Christie wrote:***

Canadian burial squads followed the attack, burying the dead in temporary battlefield cemeteries, including mine craters. 44 of the dead of the Canadian Scottish were buried in a mine crater in No Man's Land, designated CA40.

The first part of that statement is correct, if it is a reference only to Zivy or Lichfield Craters. For the second part of the statement, I think we need to see some evidence that:

- the missing 44 men were buried in a mine crater, not in a field or in the areas around a mine crater
- the mine crater at 51b.A10.c.9.7 is called CA40 and therefore the CWGC is incorrect - still no confirmation from the CWGC as of this date

The only statement that I have found is the one that was made and remains on the CWGC web page:

***CWGC wrote:***

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

This clearly says that 44 men were buried some distance from 51b.A.10.c.3.2 and it makes no reference to a mine crater. Hopefully the CWGC will provide clarification in the next few weeks. They responded the following day after we identified the error in the case of Lt. Jack Kipling.

On another note - and as of yet I have not done all the checks and cross checks - but there are fuzzy records that suggest there are a large number of men from the 16th Battalion in the Orchard Dump Cemetery, many unknown and relocated from other cemeteries in numbers. There are a great number of references to SPECIAL CROSSES and BURIED NEAR THIS SPOT. Based on the location and some of the positive knowns, they may all be from later in the month. This is going to take some work to figure this out. But on to top it looks like a lot of 16th Battalion men in a cemetery built by the 2nd Division?

They say this about one of the cemeteries that was concentrated into Orchard Dump:

***CWGC wrote:***

WILLERVAL CANADIAN CEMETERY (or VANCOUVER ROAD CEMETERY) made by the 2nd Canadian Division in May 1917, and containing the graves of 34 Canadian soldiers. It stood about midway between Vimy and Fresnoy.

Take a look at some of these sheets:

Some known and some unknown in later April:

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031592.JPG>

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031595.JPG>

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031596.JPG>

Then we jump to a lot of unknown: (note the faded or erased ink "16th Canadians" - 28 of them)

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031619.JPG>

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031620.JPG>

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 031621.JPG>

Now note the comparable COG-BR forms that are from a cemetery that has a 44a listing (and correctly) as was in error on many of the COD cards from the missing men (the CA40 cards shown on the film). Perhaps just coincidence, but it needs to be checked.



<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 456249.JPG>

What is gnawing at my wee brain is that if these are all 16th Battalion unknowns then it takes the list on the Vimy Memorial past the limit. Remember there are 57 on the Vimy Memorial for April 9th. That may increase to 63 by the end of April (needs to be checked) and no more than 66 to the end of May. If 40 of them are still buried in 51b.A10 then we don't have enough?

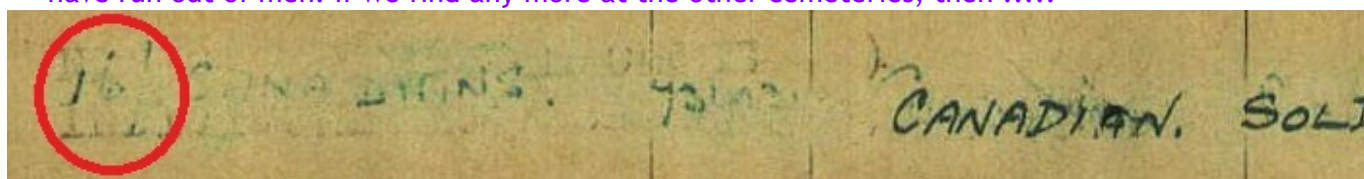
- I checked that and added it to a spreadsheet and took out the ones that are not 16th (i.e. 116th) and it nets out at 57 to April 9th and another 6 to May 2nd for a total of 63. That includes the 5 that were at Farbus Woods in late April and early May. You have to count them as they may have gone into Willerval and were concentrated into Orchard Dump.
- You will remember there were 49 on the cross at Nine Elms for Special Memorial No. 9 and 57 on the Vimy Memorial for April 9, 1917 so we had a difference of 8 men that were not expected to be in that "lost cemetery". If we now know that we have 63 on the Vimy Memorial for the period in question, from which we can subtract 4 that are at Lievin and 44 that are in the lost cemetery (or 40 if it includes those at Lievin) then we have a difference of only 15 missing men of the 16th Battalion. Therefore if we find more than 15 missing men in the other cemeteries the numbers do not add up.

I will be back to look at this in detail in the morning. I may be on the wrong ship!

- I have gone back and checked the primary suspect cemeteries and from that we know we have the 4 at Lievin and a possible 40 at Orchard Dump, as the sum of the ones that may be 16th Battalion before the records were altered. **That has to be coincidence that the total is 44?**
- There are two other large cemeteries that would need to be checked (Canada Cemetery No. 2 and Cabaret Rouge). They have large numbers of unknowns -226 and 422 respectively according to NC's books. What we really need is a complete database with all the entries that can be searched electronically. Too bad the CWGC did not include all the unknowns in their database. Thinking back, that is how I got into this quicksand back in October 2015 while I was trying to find the missing 58th Bn men from Massey!

I think it will all come down to whether the IWGC knew something and erased the 16th on this sheet: (all special crosses for buried near this spot)

- If you add up the mysterious men of the 16th Battalion on sheets 2031619 and 2031620, that alone is 25 men. If any more that 15 of those are men of the 16th Battalion the case is closed, as we will have run out of men. If we find any more at the other cemeteries, then .....



M.MCW.	COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 26/1/21.		Army Form
GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.			
REPORT No. 61		SCHEDULE No. 16	
COMMUNE: -ARLEUX-EN-COHELLE.			
PLACE OF BURIAL		ORCHARD DUMP CEMETERY.	
Map Reference		51b.B.10.b.80.45.	



The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erect or G. R. U'
		PLOT 9. ROW "B".			
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER.			
		"	"	"	
R. Fus .		"	"	"	
R.M.L.I.		"	"	"	
5/ London Regt 17 (London R.B.)	315745	HILL RPH	Rfn. A.	28-3-18	RV/49116.
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER.			
16/ CANADIAN INF.	72102	CANADIAN SOLDIER.			
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		
do.	do.	"	"		

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 100,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms W3372/3

ENTERED 2006  
SLIPS CHECKED A.C. 1-7-21.

There is a good chance I am wrong on this but it has to be checked.

January 12, 2016: I was! The details are below in a spider web of confusion.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by rlaughton

Posted: Mon Jan 11, 2016 9:11 am

It appears now we can take this group (Orchard Dump Cemetery) out of the equation . It was painful but it was an exercise that had to be completed to determine if there was any possibility that these men were those missing from the 16th Battalion that were in anyway associated with the CRATER or CA40. That possibility arose from the fact that the GRRF sheets were marked as UCS of the



16th Battalion, with no reference to when or where they were found. They could have come from the battlefield clearance and buried by a divisional burial team. In the end it does appear the majority are 16th Battalion but also that they are casualties from late April and early May. They are related to a burial site called C17, which may also be related to, linked to, or otherwise known as WILLERVAL or VANCOUVER.

This is probably the most confusing part of the records that I have come across to date as there are multiple copies, some with names and some without. It does appear in the end that most of the graves were named but it is likely that they are all of the class *"Buried Near this Spot"* (i.e. *they know they have them all but not which one is which*). Perhaps later I will check the headstone registers or see what is available in terms of photographs.

There are also trench map coordinates that change for the same location, some by sub-sector (a "b" versus a "c") and some by actual map designation (51.B.3 versus 44a.T.28 or 44a.T.29). On the map series the "T" sector of 44a (same as 36c) is above the "B" sector of 51b, so it may just be an overlap. Similarly Sector 27 is always above Sector 3 and 29 above 5, etc. At one point there was a combo map on the McMaster site but that link is now inactive and has been for some time. I had to make one and then to that I added the main reference points:



Once I got into the GRRF and COG-BR documents it became a spider web of an affair. In many cases there were 2, and in some cases 3, versions of the same registers. Some had names, some did not. I have sorted them out in A to F with their associated GRRF and COG-BR references for future use. It would be nice if we could post tables in here but that advancement awaits some new technology!

(click on the linked numbers to see the associated GRRF or CEG-BR document - "right click" is best to open it in another tab)

Group A:

GRRF: 2031592

COG-BR: 2456350

DUPLICATE COG-BR: 2456253

GRAVES: 8.B.21-30

COMMENTS: named in C17 at 51b.B3.c.7.4

Group B:

GRRF: 2031596

COG-BR: 2456257

GRAVES: 8.C.35-40

COMMENTS: named in C17

Group C:

GRRF: 2031619

COG-BR: 2456345

DUPLICATE COG-BR: 2456356

2nd DUPLICATE COG-BR: 2456214

GRAVES: 9.B.21-30

COMMENTS: some pages named, others not named and shown as Willerval/Vancouver but with some coordinates the same as C17 (see Pte. James as he is shown in both locations C17 and T29 on COD)

Group D:

GRRF: 2031620

COG-BR: 2456248

DUPLICATE COG-BR: 2456249

GRAVES: 9.B.31-40

COMMENTS: includes 8 men of 8th Bn. with some sheets named and others not, at Willerval

Group E:

GRRF: 2031621

COG-BR: 2456250

GRAVES: 9.B.41-50

COMMENTS: 9 UCS only King is named in 9.B.45

Group F:

GRRF: 2031629

COG-BR: 2456256

GRAVES: 9.E.37-40

COMMENTS: 1 known 16th Bn., 3 UCS

Here is an example of what was for Private James #718941 who is buried in Grave 8.C.32 at the Orchard Dump Cemetery.

He was KIA at Farbus Wood on 30 April 1917:



1. NO.		2. RANK OR RATING		3. SURNAME		4. CHRISTIAN NAME	
718941		Private		JAMES		William	
5. UNIT OR SHIP				6. DATE OF CASUALTY		7. H.Q. FILE NO.	
16th Battalion				30-4-17		649-J-2997	
8. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY				9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN			
"Killed in Action"							
10. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY							
FARBUS WOOD							
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.							
12. CEMETERY		13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY		14. GRAVE LOCATION		15.	
Orchard Dump Cemetery,		5 miles North East of Arras, France.		Grave.....			
				Plot.....			
				Row.....			
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN		17. EXPOSURE NO.		18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SURROUNDINGS			
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.							

It was reported that he was recovered from 44a.T.29 (same as 36c.T.29) and buried in 8.C.32:

20. REPORTED LOCATION OF GRAVE.	
Orchard Dump Cemetery, Plot 8. Row C. Grave 32.	
21. REMARKS.	
Exhumed from: about 4½ miles South of Lens, Sheet 44a.T.29.	

However if we check the COG-BR the body was found at 51b.B.3.b.7.4:

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Reburials).**  
**BURIAL RETURN.**

Name of Cemetery of Reburial ORCHARD DUMP CEMETERY Sheet 51B. B10.b80. 1875-90.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Were
8	C	31	Sheet 51B. B3 B74	Batt.	427824 Pte. Armstrong.	Cross.	
		32	" " B3 B74	"	1718241 Pte. W. James.	"	
		33	" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
		34	" " B3 B74	"	426663 Cpl. G.E. Courtwright.	"	
		35	" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
		36	" " B3 B74	"	721671 Pte. G. Mc Dams.	"	
		37	" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
		38	" " B3 B74	"	<del>423007 Pte. E. Dawson.</del>	"	
		39	" " B3 B74	"	<del>16th. Can. Scot. Batt.</del>	"	
		40	" " B3 B74	"	736572 Pte. D.G. Mabb.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	171380 Pte. E. Griffin.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	708079 Pte. E.C. Semfort.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	<del>718904 Pte. Anovdahl.</del>	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	718673 Pte. Gardiner.	"	
			" " B3 B74	"	16th. Can. Scot. Batt.	"	

15 MAY 1920

(Sgd.) R.H. Adams. Lt. Comdr  
Arleux D

All names on one Cr.

Actual Name Thelus 46/4

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial O

I thought perhaps he was moved from his battlefield burial site to C17 or Willerval and then to Orchard Dump, however that can not be as the coordinates for Orchard Dump Cemetery are 51b.B.10.b.80.45, so a completely different location from those mentioned in the files. This lad got around!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **laughton**

Posted: **Tue Jan 12, 2016 3:29 pm**

Join me in a little travel back in time when we thought that the CA40 site was 274 metres west of the MAIN ROAD and we took you away from the road between Arras and Lens to the road into Thelus. Were we wrong in that assumption and in fact the main road was the one that we omitted since it did not appear to have a "light rail track" in the area? Maybe it was just not shown on the map?

Just to refresh, this is where CA40 is located as described by the CWGC:

### CWGC web page wrote:

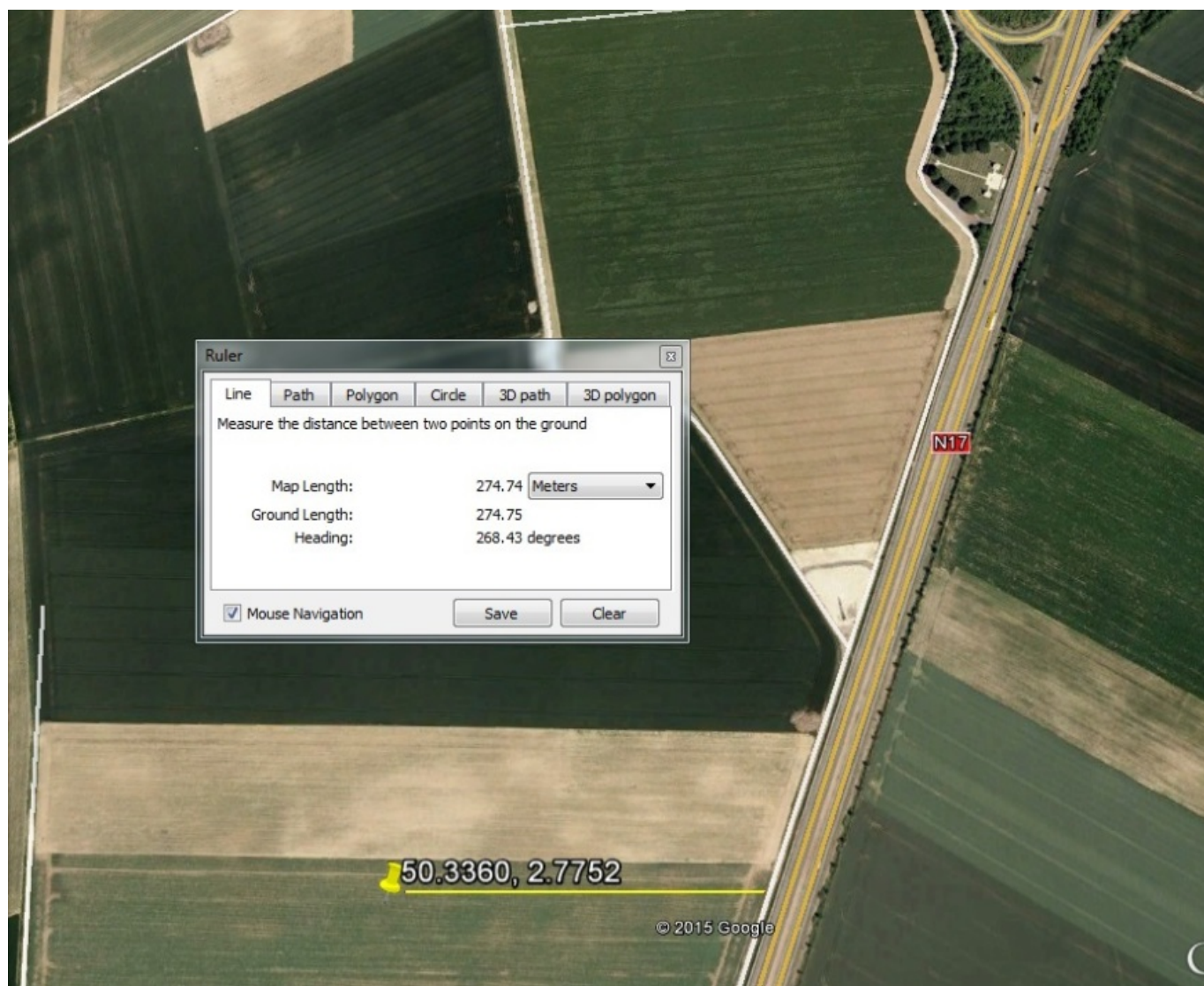
GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

We knew we were looking for a crater, so I started to look for a crater that was 274 metres west of the main road between Arras and Lens and that is the road that goes through "les Tilleuis". Perhaps that was the correct location all along and we have no knowledge of a light railway track as it only existed during the battle.

Guess what? I found a significant crater and it is exactly 274 metres west of the Main Road. Is that coincidence? Maybe - probably - well we just don't know, but once again we have to deal with all the



options and either eliminate them (as per above with Orchard Dump Cemetery) or keep them in the analysis. Take a look at the measurement on this crater, using the Google Earth ruler:



Got that location? Now read the descriptive text of that location: (the key part is in the red box but the paragraph above ties you into the story of the area)



Continue directly south along the road, which at this stage runs more or less along the former British/Canadian front line, with occasional salients to the left (east) of it. In one of these, 400 metres from (7), is **Bentata Subway (8)**, currently marked by a prominent, solitary, elderflower bush ( $50^{\circ} 20.92'N$ ,  $2^{\circ} 46.48'E$ ); this subway had some 680 metres of tunnelling and a number of exits, the rear entrances being at about (9), around 350 metres west of the track. The 14th Battalion CEF had its HQ in this subway for the attack on 9 April, having previously been in the rear at Maison Blanche. After another 150 metres or so (10) **Douai Subway** ran under the road, going into another salient, in part of which was Paris Redoubt. In No Man's Land here lay the Paris group of craters. Douai Subway was used by the 15th Battalion (the 48th Highlanders of Canada) CEF for the attack on 9 April 1917. Graffiti relating to this battalion is to be found in the Maison Blanche *souterraine*, including a particularly fine representation of the regimental badge. Both it and the 14th Battalion CEF (as well as the 16th Battalion CEF, on the left flank) formed the attacking front of 3 (Cdn) Brigade on 9 April, the left-hand brigade of Currie's 1st (Cdn) Division. The rear entrances of the subway (11) were situated in what are now arable fields, about 350 metres west-southwest of (10).

A short distance beyond turn right on to a narrow road at the junction (12) ( $50^{\circ} 20.16'N$ ,  $2^{\circ} 46.51'E$ ). Just to the left of the road on which you have been travelling, on 19 May 1916 185 Tunnelling Company fired a Fougasse charge at the head of Argyll Trench, creating a significant crater 55 metres across and about 10 deep. This marked a turning point in 185's mining war in the sector, which in the preceding weeks had been dominated by German blasts (see Chapter 7 for more details and descriptions);

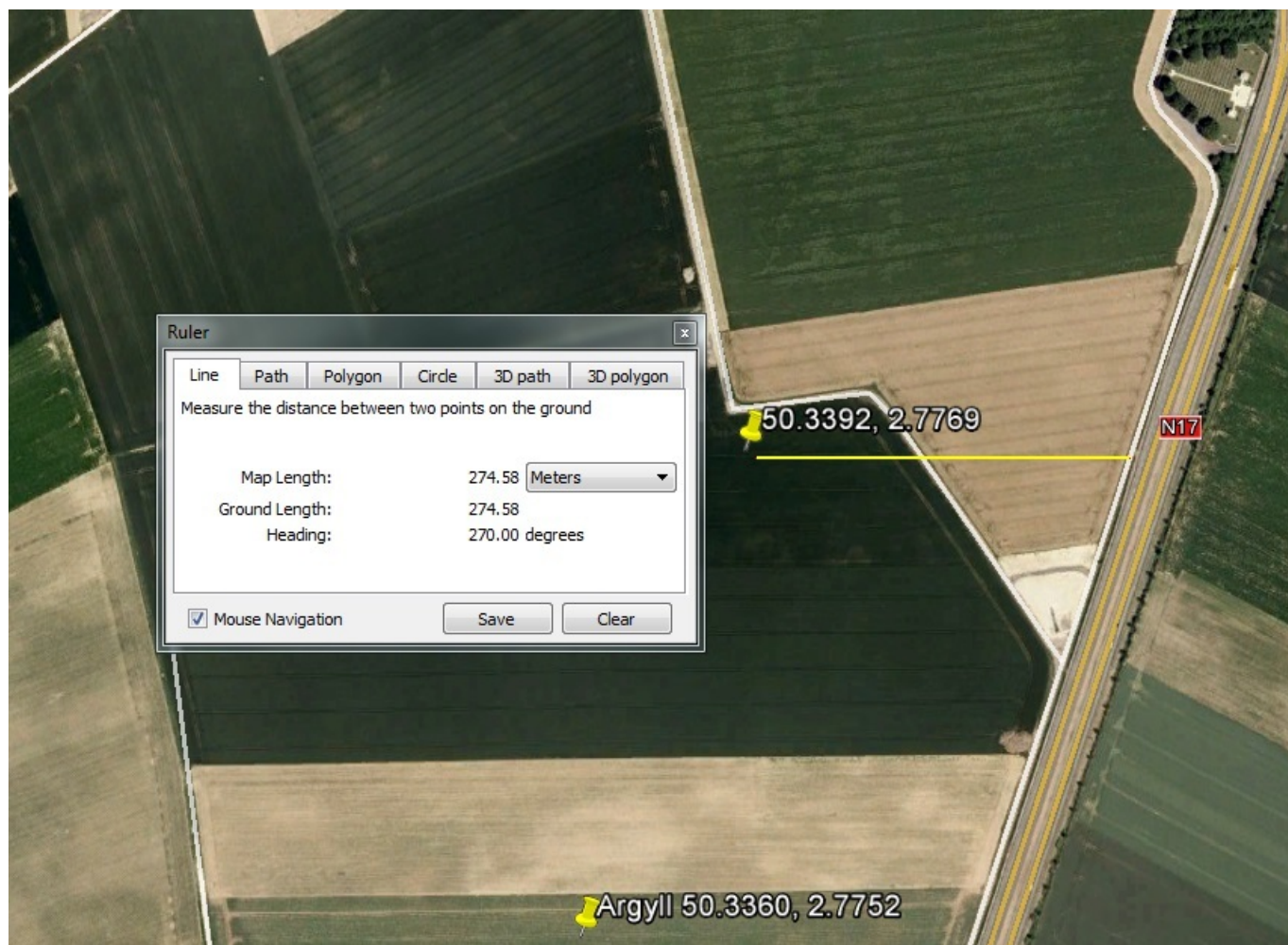
I took those GPS coordinates and converted them to digital coordinates of 50.3360, 2.7752 and then converted that back to trench map coordinates which gives:

**51b.A22.a.57.33**

and that is what is shown on the Google Earth Image as 274 metres west of the main road. Is it possible that there was a "light" rail line there in April 1917, perhaps, something for further research. Regardless, we have another large crater, of the same diameter and size and this time it matches the CWGC description.

I think these were probably part of the Argyll Group of craters.

Based on the period trench maps from the Imperial War Museum, I would place the Argyll Craters a little further north than what was reported in the text on the Vimy Underground at location **51b.A22.a.8.9**, however that does not impact on this theory as that location is also 274m west of the main road. Also, please keep in mind that I am converting rectangular grid map coordinates into GPS coordinates and that is not a perfect translation - but the best we have at this time. You have to refer back to Dave's presentation on that for a full understanding (last paragraph of this page).



Do you suppose this is a possibility? Should we check it out further?

On another note, all very much related to this topic, I heard back from the CWGC today and they can not help us place the location of CA40. They have reported, as what we expected, what was in the historical documents:

***CWGC in response to query about CA40 wrote:***

In terms of the rest of your query, I should explain that we are not trained historians or researchers here and so, I am afraid, aren't equipped to offer much by way of clarification with respect to the complex questions you ask. Additionally, because of this, we just can't comment on research conducted by third parties. The documentation that you see attached to our individual casualty records should be viewed as historical working documents, complete with mysterious clerical markings and notes that we just cannot interpret today. The map references refer to period military maps, resources which I am afraid we do not have access to, but I will say that the locations given, I note, are approximate references. All the information that we have is available on our website.

It's especially difficult in this case because the site you reference simply no longer exists and the map references as you see on these documents would have been noted initially by GRUs and then transcribed multiple times by many clerks.

In terms of the 44 men you reference who are now commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, I am afraid that we hold no information on their initial places of burial. In general terms, however, we are aware that there were many cases where a casualty's initial place of burial was destroyed by subsequent shellfire, etc. In cases like these, we would commemorate



these men on a memorial to the missing.

What matters most to us is that a casualty is commemorated - either by a CWGC headstone or on one of our memorials - in perpetuity.

I absolutely appreciate that this reply isn't what you were seeking in terms of clarification, but I hope you'll understand that, we are unable to provide the level of clarity you seek.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 11:38 am**

A closer look at the details. This is the trench map showing the sectors from A15 to A23 from 51b where I have used the central + of the trench map to match the GPS coordinates of those exact locations. So for example in the upper left where the red dot is over the A15 mark that is for 51b.A.15.b.00.00, which translates to a GPS of 50.3433. 2.7649 ( 50°20'35.88"N 2°45'53.64"E). The digital number is generated by [Great War British Trench Map Coordinates Converter].

This then correctly shows the approximate location of the Argyll Crater from the Durand Group project.





For the purpose of making sure everything is lined up properly I can then put the DURAND SKETCH over the Trench Map which is over Google Earth:



A little "busy" so now that it is lined up I can remove the trench map. Here I have also shown Argyll's location and the existing Arras Road Cemetery as a reference:

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 12:49 pm**

I thought that was a wonderful reply from the CWGC - though we did not find what we wanted. I would not have expected such detail in the reply, and the author addressed many of our concerns. It was a very compassionate, and human reply. Much better than being shrugged off and told to "watch the video," or "did you read my book", but I digress.

And yes, I would continue investigating this new area "274 metres west of the main road." It has potential (and is not buried under the A26)!

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 5:12 pm**

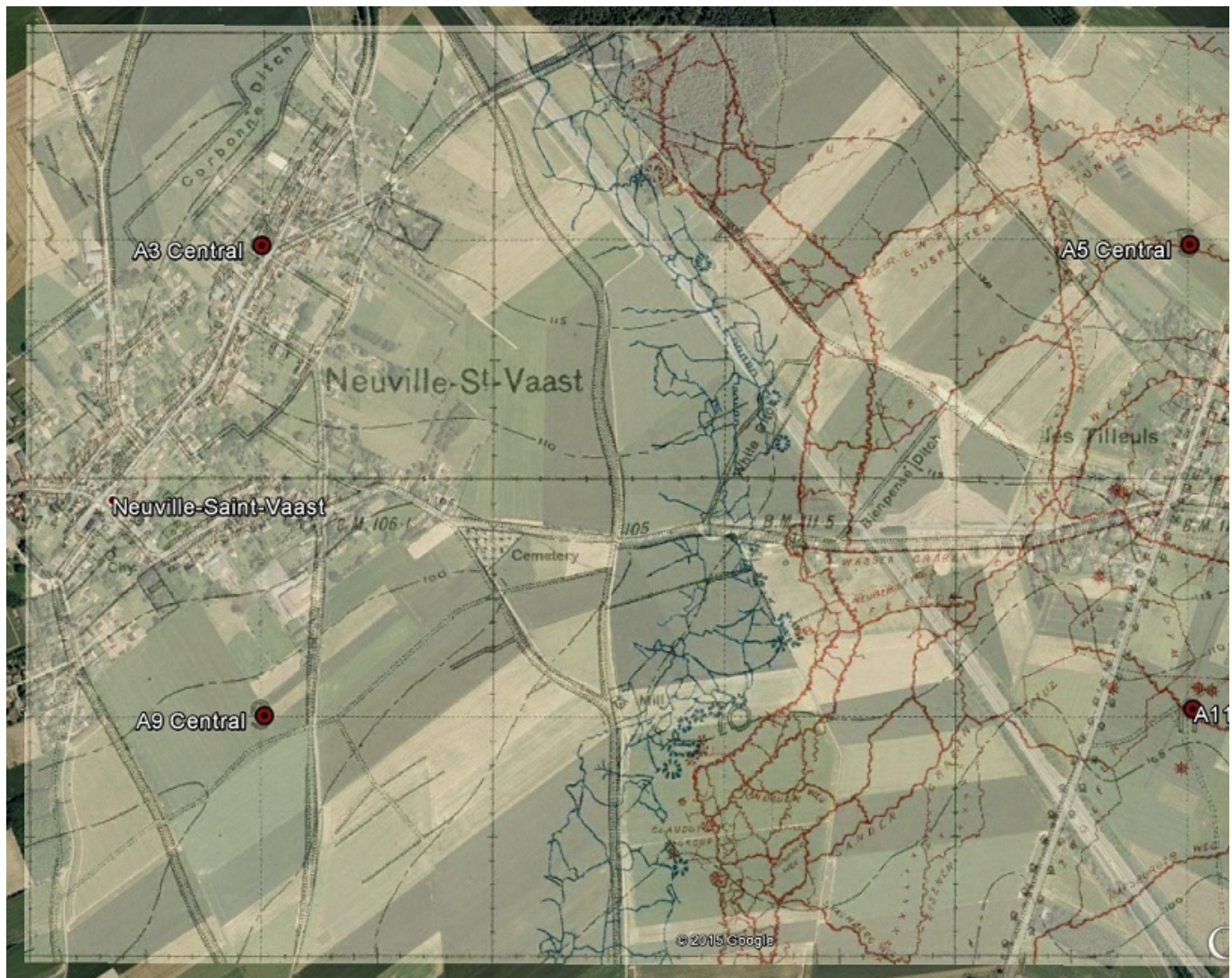
The concept of using the GRID CENTRAL locations in the Google Earth mapping exercise is showing some advantages. I wish I had thought of that a few years ago when I did all the Nicholson Maps, however back then I did not have the DVD with all the IWM trench maps.

I followed the same approach as what I used above for the DURAND mapping exercise but in this case I went back to the original area of **51b.A.10.c.9.7** (I just refer to this now not as the Christie CA40 area



but the A10 Crater) where you can see something quite significant. This is quite important when you compare it to the photograph that Ted took of the site (the one where he put the flag in the field in the middle of the crater).

Here is what you see now in this new overlay approach:



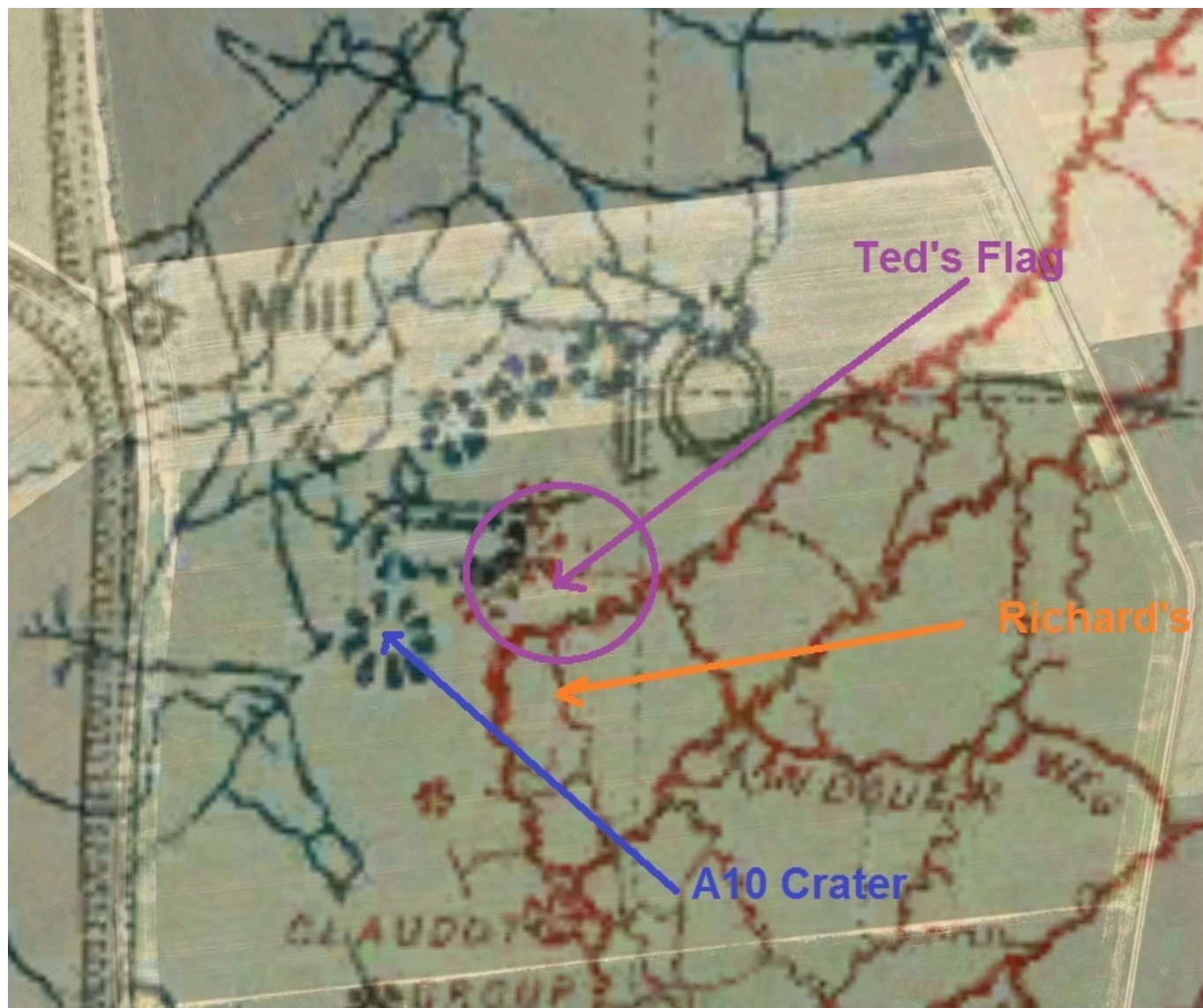
I must admit it is not as clear here on the forum as it is on my computer screen when I do this live on Google Earth but it gives you the idea. I can put these in a KMZ file for those that want to look at these on their own computers in high resolution Google Earth view.

Here is what I see that is quite different than what I thought we were looking at previously. In the image below I have put a BLUE arrow to where I believe Norm Christie is directing us to a crater. That may or may not be correct but he can certainly tell us if we have the wrong location, as that is a 51b.A10.c.9.7 which are the references that he provided. The ORANGE arrow is where I previously envisaged the burial area, which I suspected was a trench and not a crater. That was a fallacy perhaps of the inaccuracy of plotting the trench map references versus a Google Earth image. The last spot is the PURPLE area, which I have also circled, which is where Ted put his flag. You will recall that in that photograph that Ted said there was a marked depression and that shows up very clearly on Google Earth even today. On my computer screen that same brown shaded area is exactly at the end of the PURPLE arrow and it is very clearly a direct link to the same markings on a 1917 trench map. I had to look several times to make sure it was not an optical illusion.



There is no evidence to suggest that this is the burial area, it just moves the A10 suspect area to the northeast apparently on the east side of another group of smaller craters. It is quite possible that this is where Norm was directing us from the start and not at the larger crater which might be the Vissec Crater. In the video it is hard to determine exactly which crater is referenced by the words.

What is different about the location shown here is that these are RED craters which I assume means they were made by German mines and the British craters are marked in blue. These are also significantly smaller, thus more likely suitable for a burial site, in that they are not 10 metres deep and full of water.



To help with this, here is the trench map without the overlay component (still purple circle), followed by a copy of Ted's image with the red flag:



20/24





The Durand Group reported to the previous researchers who asked the same question we asked this week that although they could not rule out this area as a burial site they believed it was highly improbable. The Durand Group also reported that in their opinion, the use of subsurface investigations were impractical in this area due to the depth of the anticipated remains, the soil conditions (primarily the chalk) and other debris from the battlefield and infilling. Most certainly we can learn a lot from the DURAND GROUP and they appear most willing to cooperate with this investigation and continue dialogue.

Now that it appears that we have eliminated the other "immediate" cemeteries, I believe that we are back to these alternatives:

1. the A10 Crater at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 as proposed by Norm Christie, if that is what he specifies
  2. the CA40 site as described by the CWGC at 51b.A.17.b.4.5, if the Thelus Road is the "main road"
  3. the alternate CA40 site at 51b.A.22.a.57.33 if the 274m mark is from the "main road" from Arras to Lens
  4. the edge of the German craters shown in the purple circle at 51b.A.10.c.90.85 in the images above
- I should have also included in that list the possibility that the men are in one of the cemeteries (i.e Nine Elms) that has "trench burials" and they were not included on the stones or that they were buried within the cemetery in an unmarked area (along the edges perhaps). I forget sometimes to think back to those comments from Bob Richardson that "trench burials" are very much different than "individual graves". Who knows what happened back in the circa 1917-1921 era, they had so much to accomplish under such difficult circumstances. The e-mail from the CWGC this week reflects even their inability to rely on 100 year old records.

It would be my recommendation to our team here in Milton that is looking for the lost Milton Soldier (Private Baguley) that there is enough evidence to continue to search for the remains of these men, as they may never have been recovered. However, I would have to caution them that allocating \$110,000 to investigate only the one site at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 would be impractical without further evidence to support that alternative. Those boys have been there for a long time now and it is probably reasonable to get all the people working together to arrive at a viable plan for further investigations. It would not appear that there is a need for a major capital influx to go to the next stage. I believe Ted has some good ideas how this can be done but I will leave that to him to outline when he feels the time is right.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 6:01 pm**



I have been following this topic with great interest. It can be overwhelming for an outsider to keep track of all the documents and locations. I had the privilege to attend the Caix ceremony last year for the Canadian soldiers found at Hallu. It was a very moving ceremony and I got to chat with various people including the relatives of the "found" soldiers. I hope at some point a resolution is found as to the location of the 44 soldiers so the actual physical search can proceed.

I found a map from Haig's Despatches from 1917 (part of my Great War Digital Collection) and it shows a railway station running in that area. It is a pre-war train track and not a military train track. I suppose it was wrecked during the various battles but was used for references.

I have put a marker at Richard's suggested location of 50.3392, 2.7769.



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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 6:35 pm**

Yes, I can confirm Richard's description of where I planted the flag. I circled the area once by car, noted the bend on the eastern road, and decided to approach from the western road....I pretty much traveled 100 meters south-east in the direction of the road from Neuville St Vaast, and 100 metres east of the north-south road.

I certainly knew I had it right when I approached and noticed the depression.

I have been wondering what it will look like this coming April, when I will be visiting once again....a good time, as the crop won't be too high...that is if they don't plant canola this year.

This time, I will be looking for other depressions that may not be apparent from Google Earth.

And I am very glad to welcome **vimyboy** to the conversation!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 7:30 pm**

Incorrect post.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 7:48 pm**

**vimyboy wrote:**

I have put a marker at Richard's suggested location of 50.3392, 2.7769.

Incredible! Who would have thought of a pre-war train. As we have said before, all of us have to "take off our blinders" and look at all the possibilities, not just the ones we want to be true. Can we get additional information on the source of this information so it can be used as a reference?

Yes, please tell us more and share it with everyone as we do here.

I made a KMZ file of my folder "CA40 Investigation" which has all the reference links, so if you download it and open it in Google Earth it will show all the PlaceMarks. If I remember correctly, as I have not used this for a while and this is NOT A TOUR, you will need to manually "turn on or off" the various placemarks. If it works as I believe, the placemark folder should open with 3 folders (GE

Overlays Craters Durand Group; CA40 Story with Codes; CA Story less Codes and CA40 Sections A3-A11). If you turn on all those placemarks at once you screen will look like a pizza!

I will try it myself and see how it works but for now, here is the file: [\(working okay\)](#)

### CA40 Project KMZ File

If I remember correctly it is BEST if you have Google Earth running before you download the file and then it will appear automatically. The alternative I believe is to download the file and then tell it to OPEN in Google Earth, I use GOOGLE EARTH PRO which was available for a FREE DOWNLOAD. I am not sure what is available now but if there is an issue I can upload the program and provide the free password.

Once the download is complete it should open in your TEMPORARY PLACES in Google Earth. You can then move it to your own folder, leave it temporary or delete it when you are done. I would suggest to use the file that you first UN-SELECT all the placemarks and then go to each folder and click (ADD) a placemark one at a time to see it develop. You can also activate ONE FOLDER at a time but activating ALL FOLDERS at the same time creates another pizza!

Every file that I have used in this investigation is in this folder as well:

Norm Christie and Nine Elms Cemetery

Many of those files date back to the initial discussions in 2015.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jan 13, 2016 9:30 pm**

The Durand Group article said "...2 mines were blown before the attack, 3 mines...were used to support the attack, and 8 mines were laid but not fired. It is unclear what the position was of 1 mine..."

They know where at least four of the five blown mines were?

I would like to know where they were!

And see them on Richard's great KMZ file.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jan 14, 2016 1:28 am**

After thinking about my previous post regarding the pre-war railway, I also thought about the possibility of a post-war railway or certainly one that was built sometime after the Vimy Ridge attack. It did not make sense to me that there would be a railway that close to the line before the battle. It seemed to me that they would have built a railway after they consolidated Vimy Ridge and needed a method to transport men and equipment to the new forward lines.

I found a map in the McMaster Trench Library that shows a date of July, 1918.

[http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan ... collection](http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan...collection)

There is a railway track shown on the map from Ecurie Station across the battlefields under question. I have highlighted this "military" railway in blue on the attached image and the "civilian" (pre-war) railway in red. I used Richard's pinpoints to show the relative location.





# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

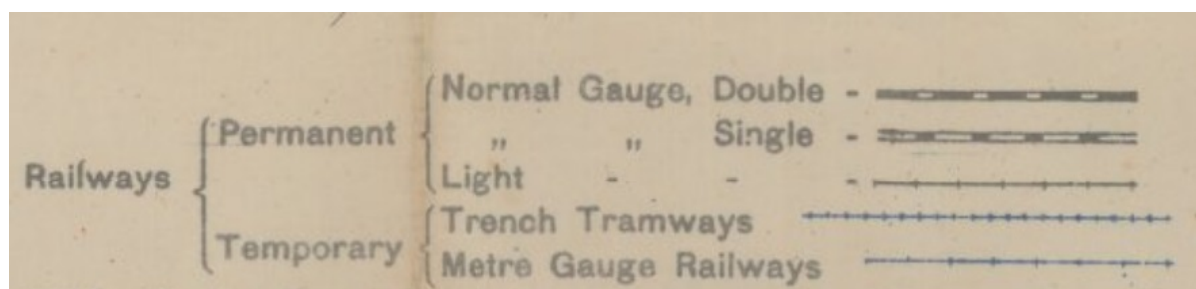
### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 6 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jan 14, 2016 7:54 am**

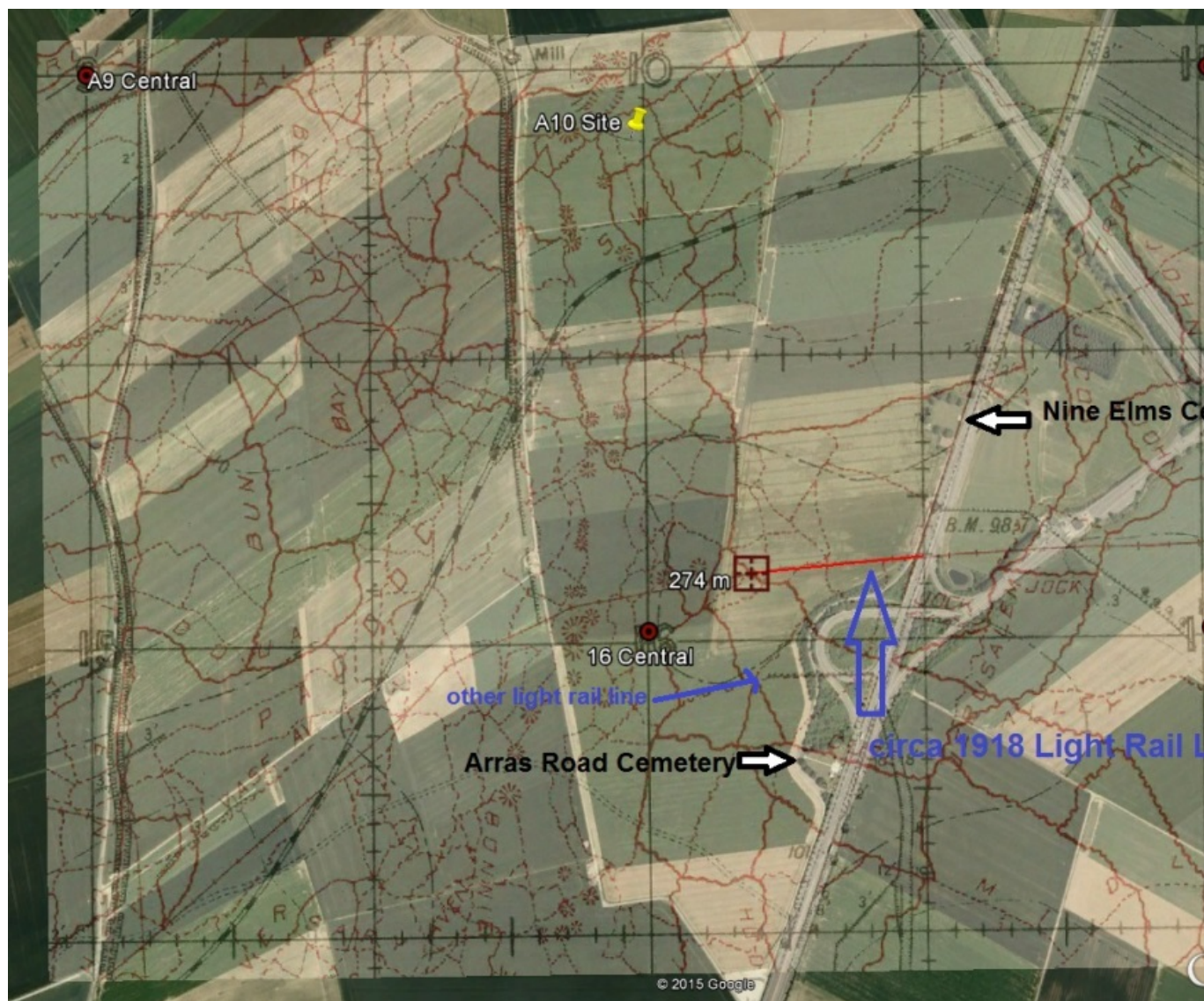
You are onto something here! I was going back in time to look at features, smart move to go forward to see what was there when the GRU's were doing their work on the field marking the burial sites. The CWGC refers to "light railway" so that is the one made of ++++++ if I am correct from the legend. I recall we have some members here that have done a lot of investigation into the railways - it might have been Grandson Michael? It might be we have to consider anything that is not of the permanent double or single gauge in the CWGC definition.



I found the matching 1:10,000 trench map on the IWM DVD. It shows the same 2 lines that *vimyboy* has marked, here the military one is in red of the format ++++++. What I had failed to notice previously, or it was not on the earlier maps, is the small railway that goes west of the main road at about **51b.A16.d.45.90** to **51b.A16.d.85.90**. In rough terms, however that is only 4 grid lines or 200 yards (182 metres). The light gauge military line, as described by *vimyboy*, would thus appear to be the more logical alternative used in the description.

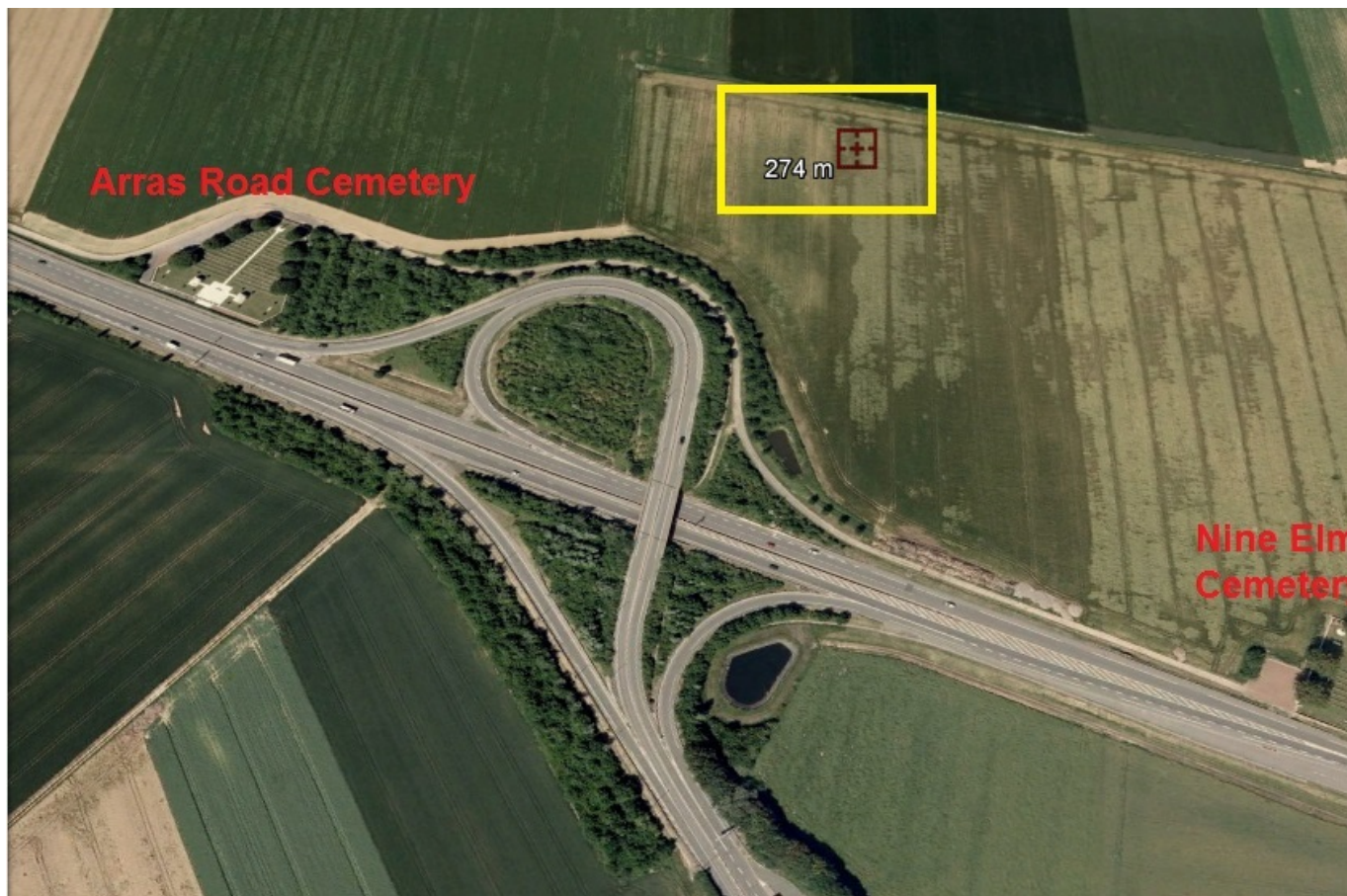
The grid locations for the 274 metre (300 yard) mark is:

- Trench Map Coordinates: **51b.A.16.b.35.20**
- GPS Coordinates: **50.3444, 2.7799**



There is nothing distinctly obvious at that location in a GE view. Ground level view is blocked by the Sunken Road.





#### Images and KMZ Folder for Light Railways

I think it might be a good idea to take a look at the War Diaries for the Railway Troops in France in the Fall of 1917, after the Canadians had moved on to Lens and then on to Passchendaele. From looking at the LAC images it appears there are a number in construction in September and October 1917. I checked in David Love's text and it says there were 6 railway battalions in France by April 1917 and 4 companies of skilled railway employees. It appears we should be looking at No. 1 and No. 2 Railway Construction battalions. The Corps of the Canadian Railway troops did not form until the summer of 1918.

Calling Henrik - we need good Danish bacon and some insight into the Railway Troops in this sector!! He was here earlier today, I will send a PM.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by 2nd CMR

Posted: Thu Jan 14, 2016 11:39 am

Probably not relevant, but the French apparently had light railways in and around Neuville St. Vaast:



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jan 14, 2016 1:02 pm**

This is not the first time I have mentioned the Hallu Case in this thread, nor will it be the last - many parallels between these two cases.

I am certain more bodies will be recovered in Hallu, and I am doing all I can to make it happen. I know I will need a lot of help, and the collaborative nature of this forum has already helped immensely. I have had several offers (thanks Rob, Tim, Richard) for assistance - especially in regards to on site investigation, GPR, etc. As I have told Richard before, *when it does* happen, the last person to deserve any credit will be me.

We have evidence in the form of a historical document - the letter written by Herbert Hunter in 1919 indicating more than eight bodies were given a decent burial by the German Army.

However, I know this is not enough evidence. When looking at the many cases of bodies recovered in the last 20 years or so, you will be hard-pressed to find a case where a single artifact led to the discovery. Indeed, corroborating evidence is not an option, but a necessity. I am trying to locate written evidence of the German Alpine Korps burying these men in Hallu on 12 Aug 1918. I need something more to proceed, but it hasn't stopped me from making progress towards the goal.

I certainly could have kept this document to myself, and no-one would be the wiser. But why?

Why would anyone become proprietary over something they do not own, especially with so much at stake?

If you have a theory, you better be prepared to defend it rigorously.

And if you do not wish to collaborate, you've made your bed - now sleep in it.

We are a proud group of amateur historians who have left their ego at the login.

I challenge you to do the same - show me I was wrong to have doubted you, and I will not only eat my words, I will stand behind you 100%.

And remember, it was a humble amateur historian's work, not an expert's, which led to 250 Australian and American soldiers discovered in 2008, now buried at Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Cemetery.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 15, 2016 3:23 pm**

Ted, I think we have some momentum going here and I bet we are going to find both the men of Hallu and the men of A10. I no longer refer to that as "CA40" as I think we all know now that the CWGC description is correct (*274 metres west of the light rail*) and we are narrowing down that location. The fact that the DURAND GROUP also finds the other theory to be quite questionable is a comforting thought. Don't get me wrong, I am not saying the CA40 at the A10 site is incorrect or not feasible, I am just saying there are too many other possible sites. More collaborative work is needed and all parties should be working on this as "a team". I did wonder about the very specific "274" reference (not 260, 275 or 280) until I realized that someone once said "*about 300 yards west of the road*". A literal translation of the 300 into metric, or so it appears.

In the past I believe too much weight was place on the description of the site of CA40 from the "Circumstance of Death" files or the "War Graves Registers", a case we already detailed in the analysis of Pte. Robert Bradshaw #43945 (see this post in this topic). No doubt the men fell at that location but many were recovered and moved to battalion burial grounds, as described in the battalion war diaries. A reference to **Grave C.A.40** and a following reference to **51b.A.10.c.9.7** are not saying those are the same location, rather it says they were moved from "A" to "B".

VimyBoy has put us onto a good lead with the circa 1918 railway information, so I have spent some time trying to discern *what is and what is not a railway* on the old trench maps. We are all really on a learning curve as this is neither our trade or our area of expertise. Each day is however another "learning exercise" and as rewarding a hobby as one could have. I look forward to Henrik joining us in this discussion, as he has a vast knowledge of the Railway Troops and what they may have been doing in this area in 1917-1918. I tried to pick that out of the war diaries but it was a dismal failure.

I went back to Yves Buffetaut's good "picture book" (The 1917 Spring Offensive) this morning to see what he could tell me of the battlefields and post war clearance. I found two significant photographs that I think are important to our investigation and I do hope that Yves does not mind that I have placed them in this post.

The first image is what we should expect to see using one of the light railways, as I suspected that they might be used for more than munitions and other supplies. They are bringing back wounded in this photograph so I can presume they also used them to move "the dead". What better place for a burial site than along a light rail transit that comes from the front lines? Conjecture, for sure, but we will use our "scientific method" to see if that idea has merit. Note the presence of the Germans



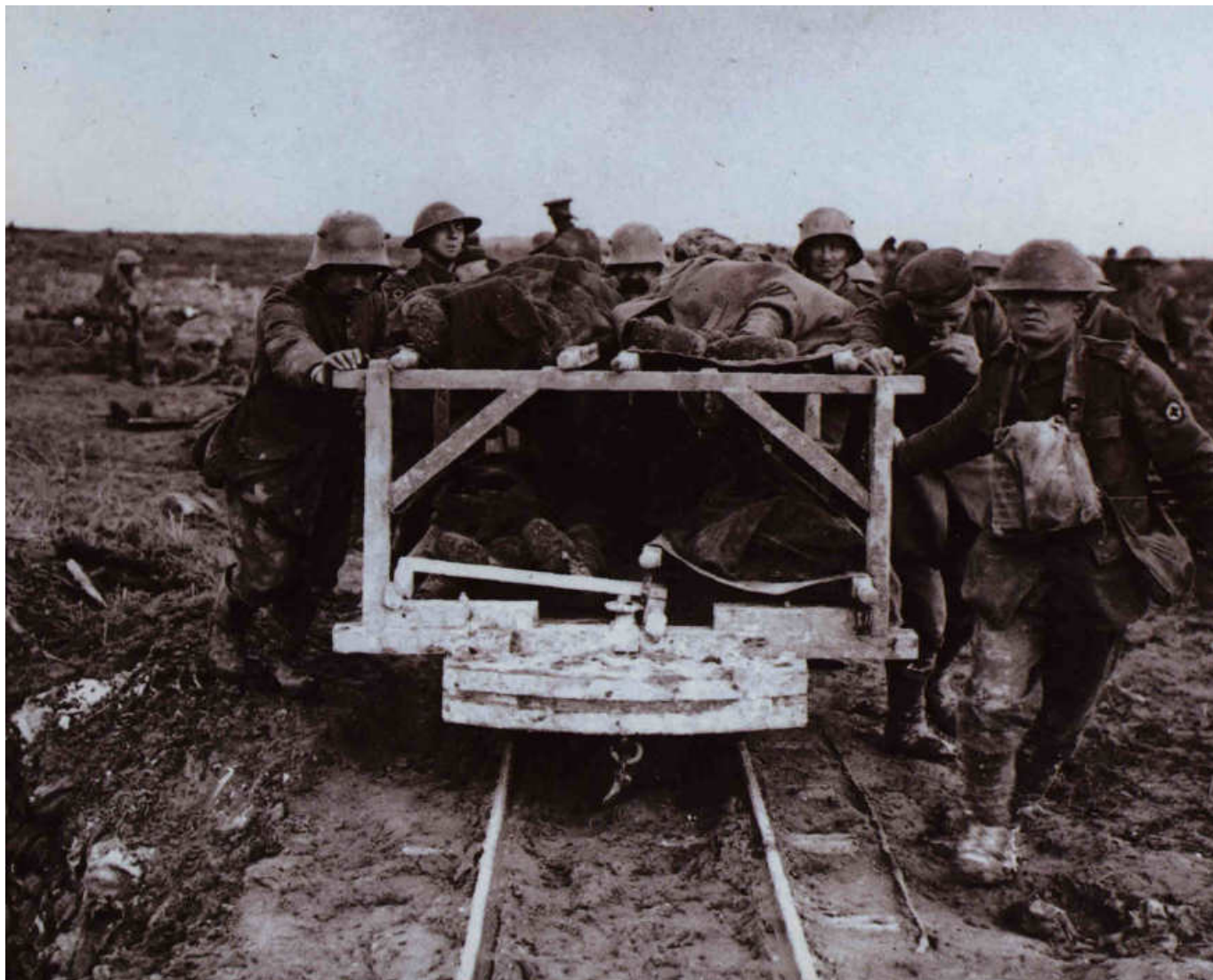
assisting in the movement of the light rail car - so as they are not "under guard" this might be a cooperative battlefield clearance exercise.

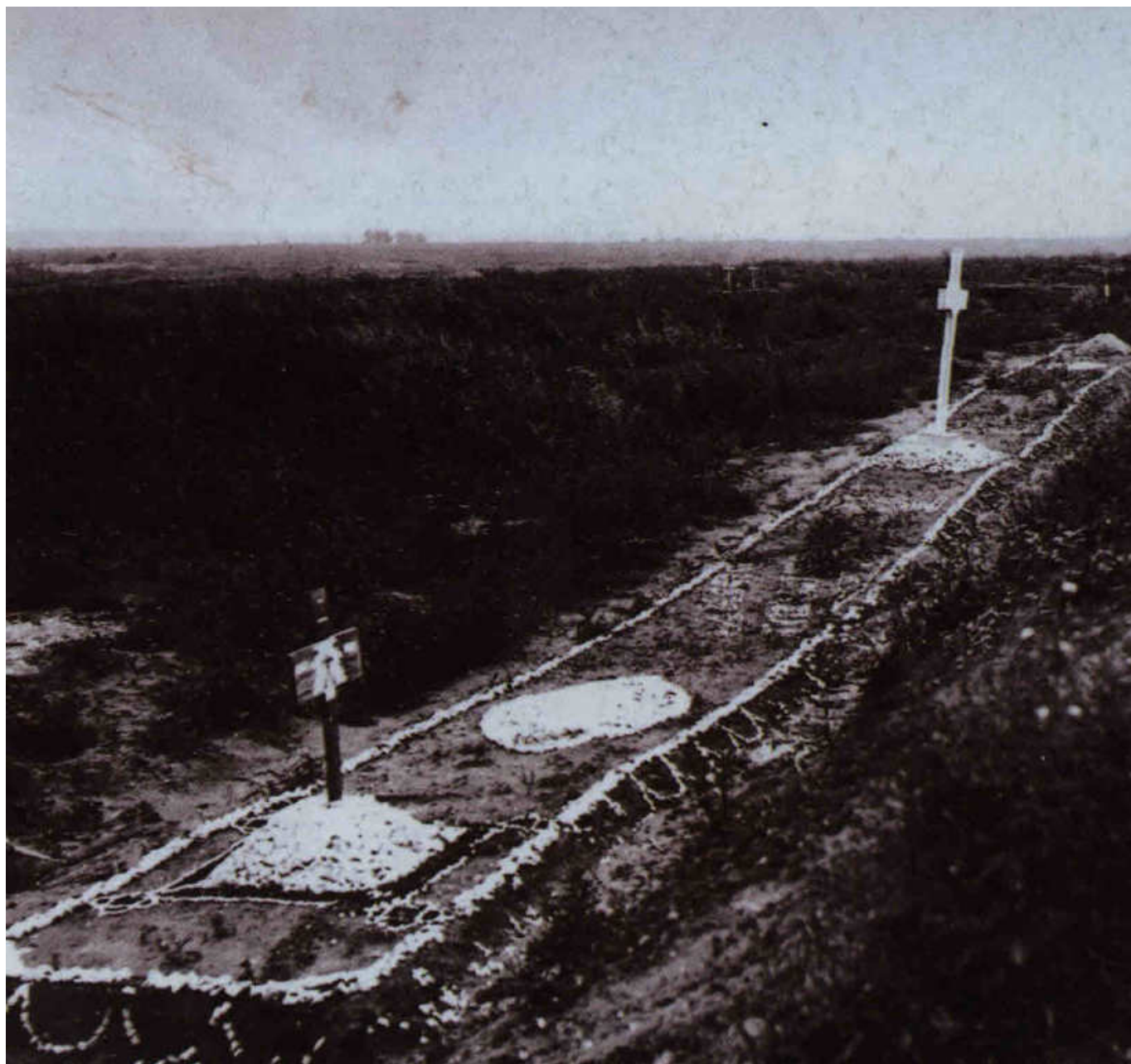
In the second picture, he shows what a Vimy burial ground might have looked like in 1917. I suspect this is more realistic than dumping them in a crater but in the same context we have to assume that is what they might have done at ZIVY and LICHFIELD so we can not rule out that possibility. Some researchers are too quick to rule out options that do not agree with what they are trying to prove, so we must be very careful that we do not fall into that trap. There are no craters that I can see in the new light rail transit burial area specified by the CWGC (the GRU at that time), so this is probably what would be found. Looks to me a lot like what they found at Fromelles - a trench burial site.

If you put these two images together, I can image the light rail transport bringing a load of bodies from the front to the area at **51b.A.16.b.35.20** (50.3444, 2.7799) for burial. It makes perfect sense and it also agrees with the CWGC records. After looking more at the "stub" at **51b.A.16.d.45.90** I do not think it is a rail stub but rather a cart path. The trench map codes are not perfect but if you look at different examples on different maps, then they do start to make sense. The more we do, the more experience we gain, and the better we will get at interpreting all these documents.

So here are Yves's images - the light rail with the wounded and how if they were "*the dead*" they would have been buried. These are what we need to be searching for when you are there in April 2016. Maybe you could get someone from the DURAND GROUP to meet you there and they could bring a portable GPR unit, as they are now no bigger than a large lawnmower or small snowblower.

If in the alternative, if you believe they are buried 9 metres deep in a crater at the "jump off" location, left behind by the battlefield burial clearance parties, then I wish you all the best with your search. Just take a shovel with a longer handle!





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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Fri Jan 15, 2016 7:30 pm**

Where would they be buried? I would suggest very close to the dressing station or trans-shipment point at the end of the railway. Those who died on the rail cars would need to be disposed of at that location. I don't know what CAMC / RAMC practice was but were casualties assessed before being trans-shipped and those found dead or thought close to death not taken further? Either way, bodies would accumulate at such a point; why take them further? Perhaps this is merely stating the obvious, in which case apologies!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 1:07 am**

After Richard's post on the light railway used to transport bodies, I had a close look at Zivy Crater and a map from 1918 and there is a railway running right beside the crater. So, it does make sense that they might transport the "dead bodies" along the railway and put them in a crater near the railway. I have found some more railway tracks around the area and will try to post an updated picture



tomorrow.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 7:13 am**

You may want to look at some of these maps in full scale, so you need to know this:

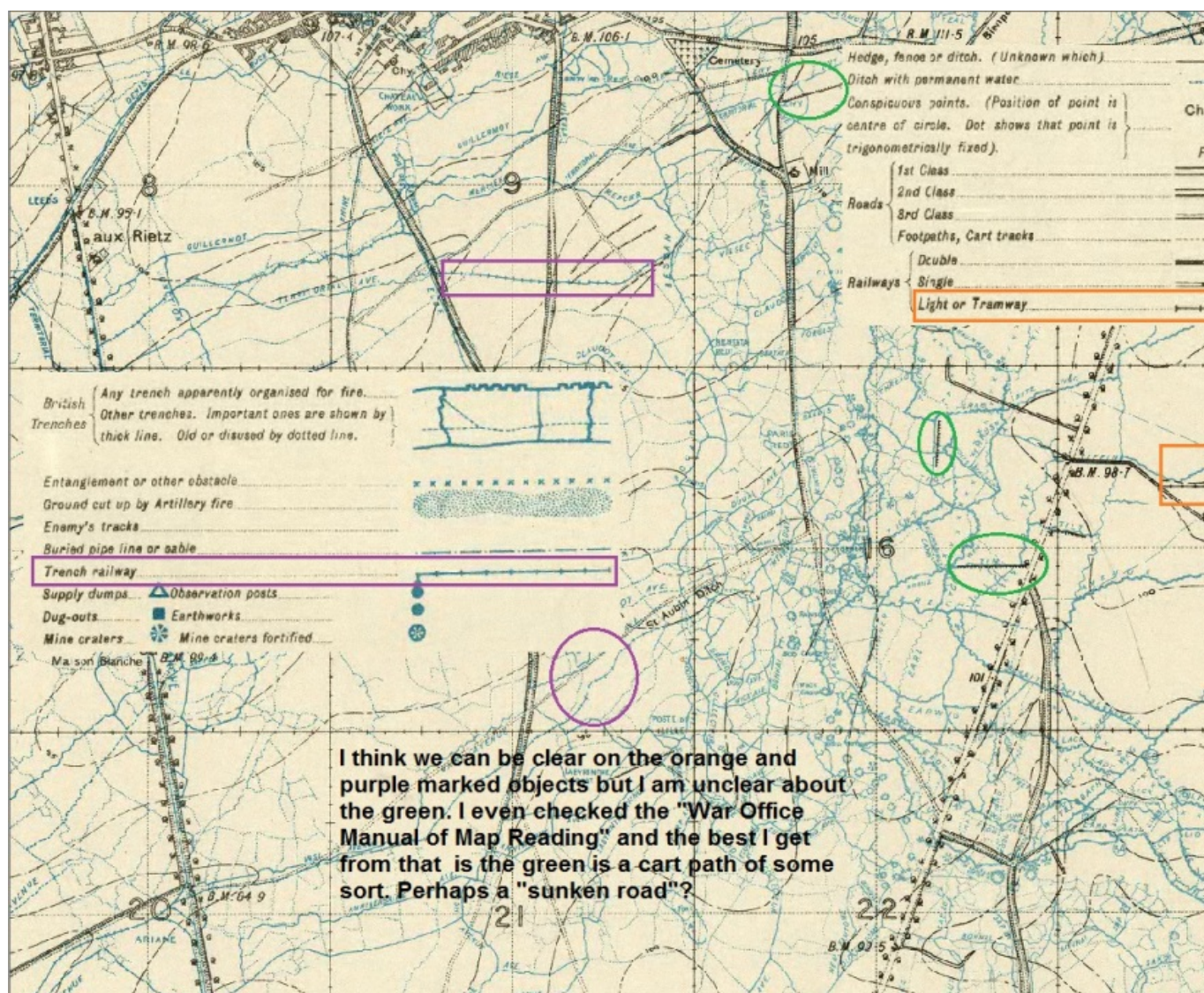
- ER Viewer SetUp Program is in Folder A6
- I put a series of the ROCLINCOURT trench maps in the CA40 in "IWM Trench Maps".

There are two (2) files to each set, one small and one large. You need both for each map and then you "click" the small of the two (blue logo) to activate. The small one should be marked \*.ers and the large one "Raster Dataset". You have to download the viewer first.

*Ted has reported that he has tested it, however Ted says "mention in your post that the viewer needs to be opened and closed once before you can view the file".*

I am on Fibe 50 so this is fast for me. Try "Roclincourt Early" first as it is 5 MB. The 1918 version is 28 MB and 1917 is 82 MB.

Now here is the question:



## My New Year's Resolution

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 2:48 pm**

My New Year's Resolution came from Niels Bohr...I wanted to continue to learn from my mistakes...

*An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes which can be made in a very narrow field. - Niels Bohr*

I had the right location from the start when I first questioned Mr Christie's description of the location of Grave CA 40.

And I identified the correct light rail because I had the exact same measurement as the CWGC - 274 metres west of the main road.

**Then I made *the* mistake** - in Google Maps I followed the *wrong* light rail, but came up with the same exact measurement as the CWGC, once again 274 metres west of the main road....but now I was about 1,000 metres south of where I should have been, and of course, 1,000 metres south of where the 16th Battalion actually was.

I AM ABSOLUTELY THRILLED WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER THE A26, AND WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LOCATION TO INVESTIGATE.

Stay tuned...I will update this post in a couple of hours with appropriate graphics, illustrating my mistake and where the missing men of the 16th Battalion *will be* found.

Yes, they will be found.

Thanks to Richard's latest post on the ER Viewer - it made the difference.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 4:09 pm**

Cleaning up some lose ends and I have gone back into my posts to warn people to read the whole topic to get the idea of the changing location of the CA40 site as we progress. I try to refer to the CRATER site not as CA40 but as the "A10 Site", so as not to confuse it with the definition of CA40 given by the CWGC. There is no final word on the location of CA40 but sounds like Ted has some news in development!

**robyn wrote:**

Norm is the expert on this, with years of experience behind him. That's good enough for me. Has anyone attempted to discuss their findings with Norm?

Nope, we have not heard a peep from Norm Christie.

**Broznitsky wrote:**

**rlaughton wrote:**

If so, that is great but I doubt that this is something anyone can discuss on the phone. In a meeting, with all the information in front of you for sure.

Perhaps one of Mr. Christie's closer contacts can advise him to read this thread, digest and prepare a set of questions/comments about the data, and then Christie could contact Richard and Ted.

**Nope, did not hear anything from any of Norm Christie's "close contacts". I did contact them but no answer.**

*robyn wrote:*

You can examine all the paperwork you want, but until equipment is on site, your assumptions don't mean anything. Therefore, there is a need for money. Christie may, or may not, have access to paperwork you don't, I won't say. But until you've put investigative boots on the ground, all your fancy overlays and theories are assumptions at best. What you may have done, however, is create scepticism which may negatively affect Christies' fundraising efforts.

**I sent a detailed response to Robyn but did not receive a reply. I will leave it for the weekend before I post my reply here. In the meantime I will continue with the overlays and assumptions, as all good investigators should do as well.**

*ejwalshe wrote:*

I had the right location from the start when I first questioned Mr Christie's description of the location of Grave CA 40.

**I am probably responsible for misleading Ted on this issue as it appears sometimes I not only do not know my "right from my left" but I also don't know "east from west". Changing the "main road" from the one from Arras to Lens from the one into Thellus also makes a big difference!**

**GAME TIME!** See you later - looking forward to Ted's answer. Don't worry about me Ted, I appreciate all of the "fancy overlays" and I don't care how many "assumptions" anyone makes, that is how you undertake an investigation. Failing that, we can just go and dig a hole somewhere and see if we find something! The DURAND group says "don't blow yourself up!"

---

## **51B.A.11.d.7.6**

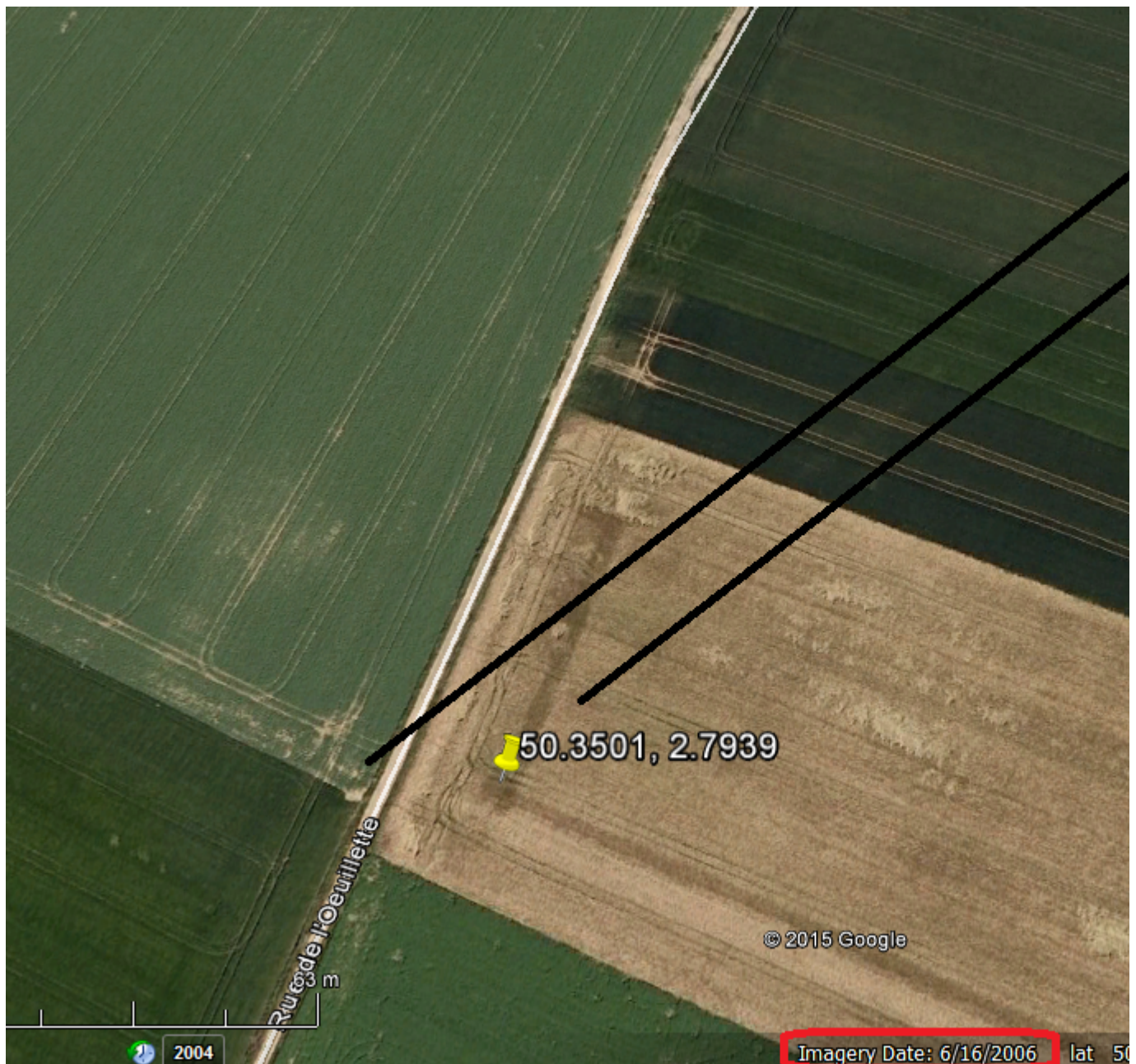
by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 5:08 pm**

I made the mistake of recognizing the wrong light rail when modifying my own Google Map. Instead of being in the vicinity of **51B.A.11.d.7.6**, I found myself under the A26 on a different light rail at **51B.17.b.1.5**.

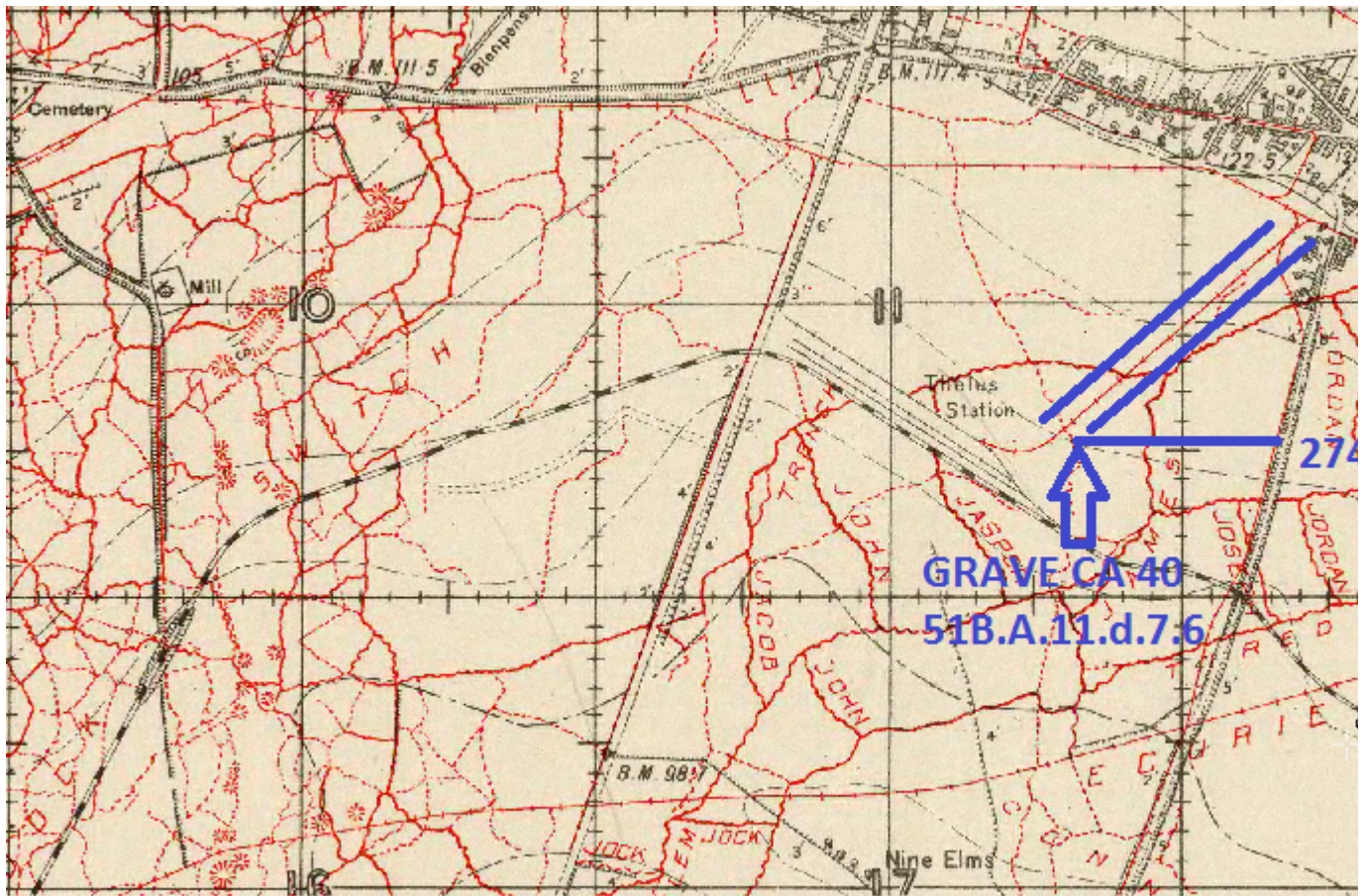
Please look at the following graphic in Google Earth on a desktop PC...enter this location: **50.3501, 2.7939**. You probably can't see it in the graphic below, but in between the parallel black lines is the light rail. Look at the diagonal direction of the light rail in the trench map (second graphic below). Then look again in Google Earth. Yes! The 2006 image date of the Google Earth photo reveals the same light rail. And the location you entered is precisely beside the light rail. *That's an extra-ordinary coincidence, or it truly is amazing that 100 years later, the imprint of the former light rail is evident?*





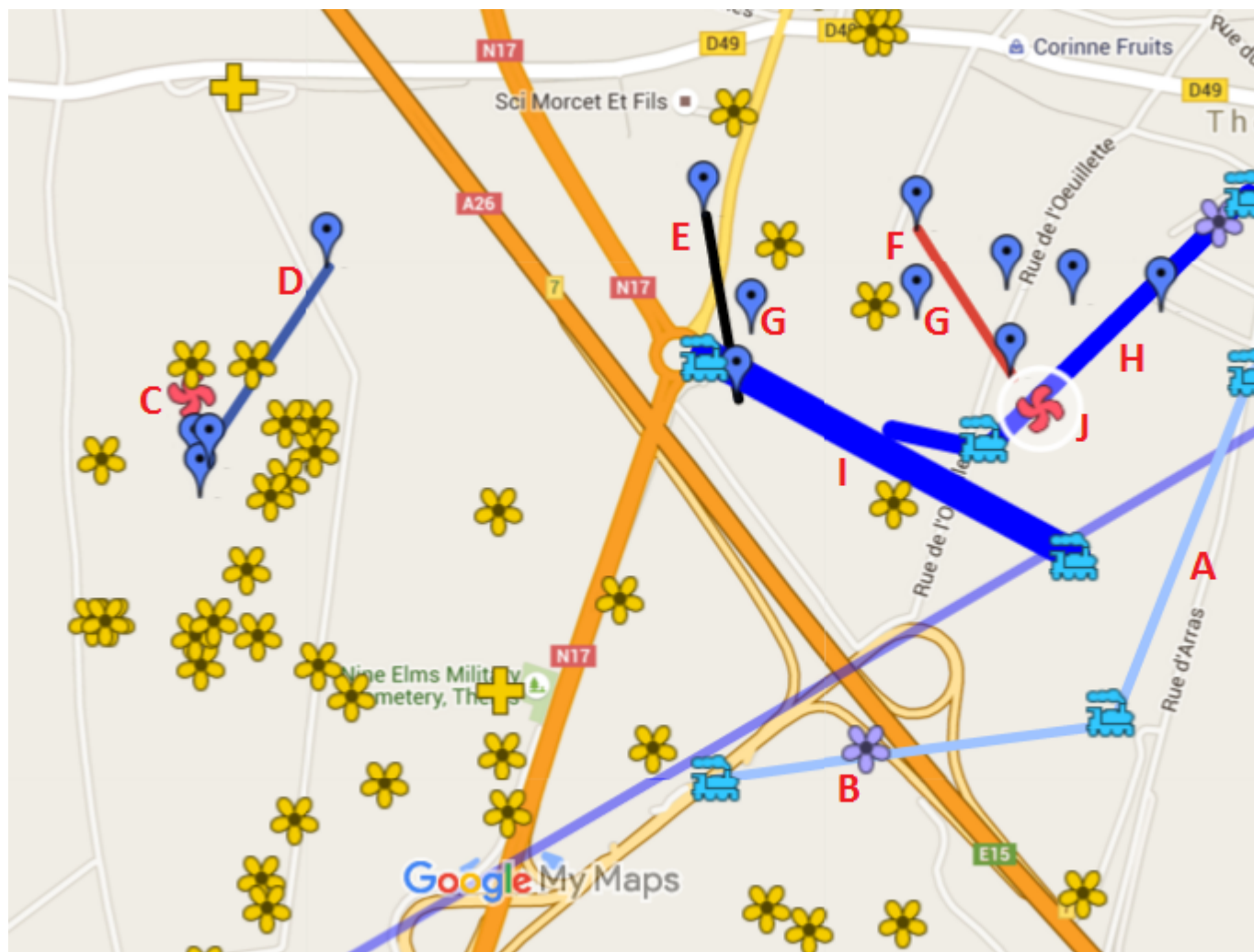
Here is the trench map in EV Viewer which led me to the correct light rail once again...





This also ties in nicely with Richard's and vimyboy's recent discoveries concerning the light rail system. The system was great because it could be improvised and repaired in a matter of hours. And I surmise there were only two types of cargo which returned from the forward lines - the dead and the wounded, accompanied by the prisoners (who did the heavy-lifting), and the lightly wounded who supervised (precisely the 3rd Brigade pre-Vimy attack instructions to the battlefield clearance units).

And now to my own Google Map which illustrates the mistake I made, and why this location **51B.A.11.d.7.6** is by far the most promising place to look



Don't be distracted by all the flowers - they represent various locations where only some of the battlefield exhumations took place (only those men moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery).

- A - the wrong light rail (pale blue light line)
- B - the wrong location 274 metres west of the main road (purple flower)
- C - Rim of crater where the 16th Battalion began their attack (red cyclone).
- D - German Front line 9 April 1917 (blue line)
- E - 16th Btn first objective (black line)
- F - 16th Btn second objective (red line)
- G - Strong points for Lewis and machine guns
- H - the correct light rail (blue line)
- I - the main rail in front of Thelus Station (heavy blue line)
- J - GRAVE CA 40 (red cyclone)

Again, my mistake was looking 274 metres west of the main road to the wrong light rail (A), to the wrong location under the A26 (B). The men began their day at the rim of a giant crater (C), in front of the German forward line (D), and you can see their forward progression (to the east) through their first objective line (E), and eventual destination, the second objective line (F) where they halted. Instructions were given to move forward Lewis and machine guns to locations (G) after the first line (E) was reached.

There were only very light casualties on their way to the first objective. The bulk of the men had to have fallen between lines (E) and (F). And the best location (J) to bury the men is now in the region where the 3rd Brigade's battlefield clearance units were instructed to bury the men (see previous



posts where we discussed these locations). They were not told to bring them back to their point of origin (far more distant now). It makes perfect sense the men were buried here, closest to where they fell. How close? Fifty metres from the south end of the second line objective.

The correct information from the CWGC website:

**GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.**

- 50.3505, 2.7951

51B.A.11.d.7.6

274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track

1,274 metres east of their origin at dawn

GRAVE CA40 is fifty metres from the south end of the second line objective for the 16th Battalion.

Now there's more work to do...back through the COG files again. Did they look at 51B.A.11.d.7.6? Did they find anything? If they never looked there, wouldn't that be the real clerical error?

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 7:37 pm**

Great work Ted and Richard!

I had a look at GE but switched the image year to 2004. You can see the outline of a possible crater at the exact location Ted listed at 50.3501, 2.7939.

Brad

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sat Jan 16, 2016 8:38 pm**

Rue de l'oeuillet: "Road of the Poppyseed."

Looks like the poppies are about to bloom!

What a documentary this will make!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sun Jan 17, 2016 12:05 am**

I returned and watched "The Missing" and it raised a couple of questions for me, especially when I saw a picture of a "crater" cemetery.

(1) Did Norm assume that CA40 was a "crater" cemetery because it fit the location he was searching for and it fit the size requirements to fit 44 bodies easily? Does the CWGC actually describe CA40 as a "crater?" Have we followed Norm's lead and therefore are looking for a "crater" cemetery instead of perhaps a "trench" cemetery as was alluded to earlier in this thread.

(2) Zivy and Lichfield cemeteries have a distinctive look to them (see image below) versus a regular crater that was not filled in. If they were to bury 44 bodies in a crater and then cover them with dirt the crater would have a flat bottom that would cover a large portion of the crater (like Zivy and Litchfield). It seems to me that any exhumation company would certainly be able to distinguish

between a regular crater and a burial crater, especially one that was that could hold 44 bodies.

I don't think it is out of the question that the bodies were buried in a trench or shallow grave. I would assume that the Canadian Army would have had to rehabilitate some of the captured ground to make it passable for trains tracks, roads, artillery, troops, etc and therefore it would be easier to "forget" a shallow trench cemetery versus a much more distinctive "crater" cemetery.

Lastly, the area that Ted has suggested today is not near the front line where mining activity was taking place, suggesting that if we are looking for a crater in that area, it would be much smaller than a front-line crater.

I only recently joined this thread and therefore can easily be corrected for my assumptions. I welcome a critique of them. Perhaps someone can let me know if the CWCG actually called CA40 a "crater."

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jan 17, 2016 4:49 pm**

For the record, I have prepared an index for this now complex topic. With Ted's permission, it has been posted in the 2nd post for this topic back on page 1. Ted has edited that list to bring it up-to-date and we will continue to provide those updates as this topic continues.

You will find that here:

### Index Page for the C.A.40 Topic

If any members find an error or omission in that list, we would appreciate hearing from you either by PM or posting here.

Thank you all for participating in this topic. I hope that within the next few days we will have this resolved once and for all.

I encourage anyone that does not agree with the analysis to date to join in the discussion. I also encourage any new members to "jump in" and ask any questions or make any suggestions. Member "vimyboy" has clearly demonstrated the importance of a "new set of eyes".

This CEFSG Forum is open to any member of the public, on an international basis. You need only to register to participate in these discussions.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sun Jan 17, 2016 5:02 pm**

You're onto more than one thing there...

According to the CWGC: *Zivy Crater was one of two mine craters (the other being Lichfield Crater) which were used by the Canadian Corps Burial Officer in 1917 for the burial of bodies found on the Vimy battlefield. The numerous groups of graves made about this time by the Canadians were not named as a rule, but serially lettered and numbered; the original name for Zivy Crater was CB 1.*

We have have discounted Zivy Crater and Lichfield Crater cemeteries. And Richard has given us a pretty good description of the naming conventions.

Read the CWGC description again - no other crater's were chosen for Vimy battlefield men to be buried

in.

And, it also suddenly appears to me, had missing 16th men been buried deep in a crater like at Zivy or Lichfield - the IWGC would have done the same thing - left them there and created a third crater-type cemetery.

They did not misplace any of the men at Zivy or Lichfield, to our understanding. How could they forget them?

Why would they forget them? Very, very hard not to notice mine craters at the time - especially ones you took note of and used to bury men in them.

And indeed, that would be quite significant to read **crater** and **Grave CA40** in the same sentence.

When I think of Zivy and Lichfield now, I have another reason for not understanding the claim: *when the IWGC went looking, they did not dig deep enough.*



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 7 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jan 18, 2016 8:38 am**

I agree with all your statements.

Here is the Canadian burial grounds GE image with CA40 moved to the correct site at **51b.A.11.d.7.6**. I had to move to **51b.A.11.d.5.5** to get the codes 50.3501, 2.7939 if that is important. If you read below, I think we should move it a wee bit to **51a.A.11.D.8.8**. It is not moved in the image immediately below, it is where Ted place it yesterday.



I initially thought the "white ground areas" on the 2004 image were low level clouds but when I went and looked at other areas the only ones like that were major 1917 battle areas, particularly the area south of CA 35. Once switching back to 2006 they all disappear, unless you then move to another area where they have rotated crops. The white spots appear only where the background is light brown and not where it is dark green. That is something we can ask GE directly.

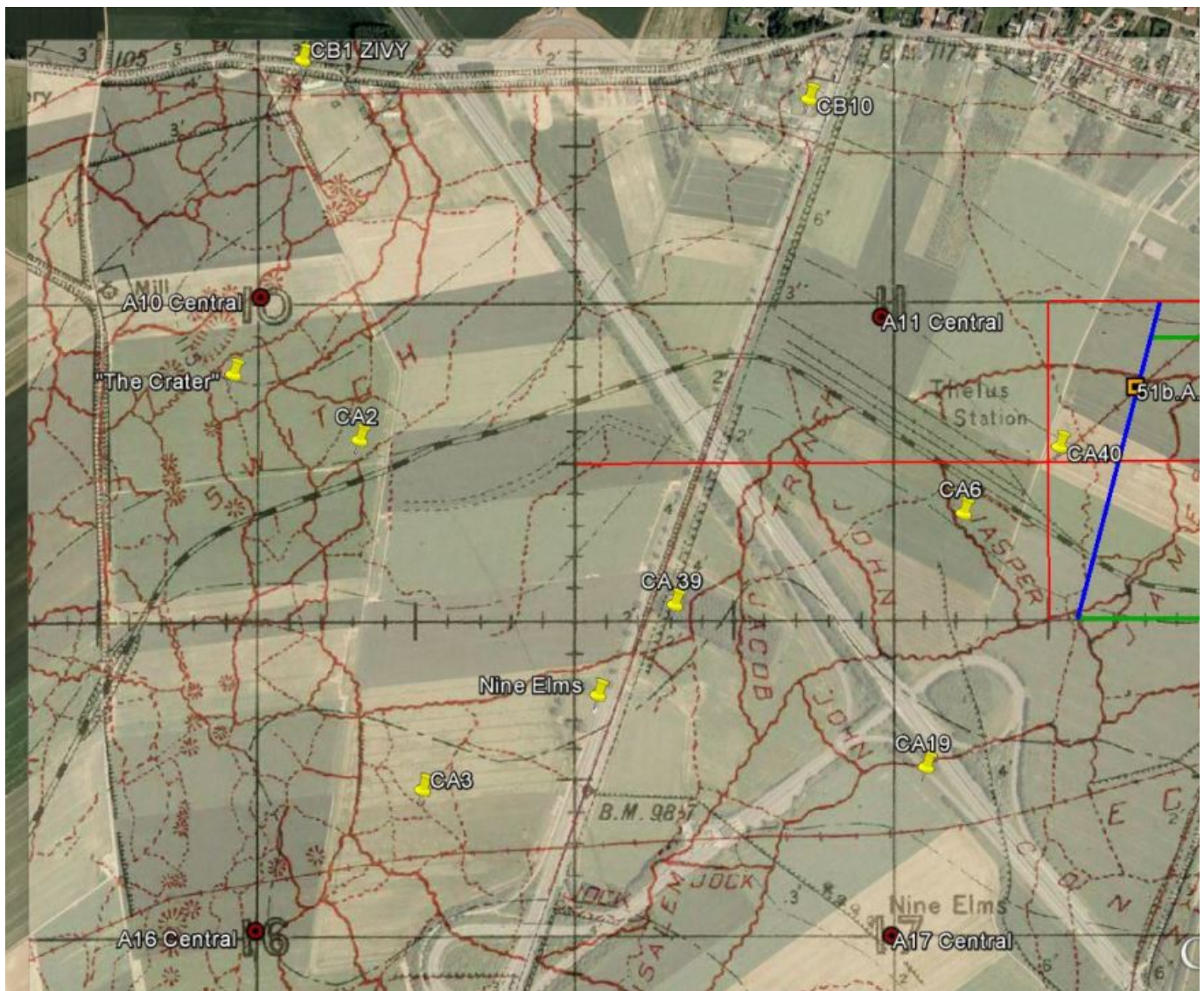


My apologies for making another "fancy overlay" but I wanted to see exactly where the 300 yard line would come out if I made a trench map overlay on Google Earth and used both the GE measurement tool and the grid map tools (50 yards per grid mark). I was actually surprised that the main lines on the trench map came out exactly to 1,000 yards, as I had never tested that before.

In the image below I placed the following:

- the horizontal central red line which is 1,000 yards to test the measurements
- a vertical 500 yard red line through the center of 11.d
- 2 green lines out from the main road into Thelus which are each 300 yards (5 grid points, 274 metres)
- a blue line parallel to the main road into Thelus that connects to the 2 green 300 yard lines
- the orange square is where they all intersect and where we should find CA40

If the measurements are precise that would shift CA40 to the northeast where the light rail line intersects the main trench at about **51b.11d.8.8** (50.3511, 2.7955) (50°21'3.96"N 2°47'43.80"E). If you go to that reading on GE it is smack in the middle of the railway line impression, if that is what we see.



It has to be an optical illusion, but you would almost think someone drew an X in the middle of the field!



I am now looking at a number of the war diaries that I was able to find in the new system. This may take time so I will come back here and add them as they are located:

- Medical
  - April 11-14 1917 - a tram line is built to the north to the Lens Arras Road on the 11th and on the 14th they report the ADS is at A.11.c.5.5.
  - April 14-16 1917 - on the 15th it is a 3,000 yard haul from the front line to the tramway so it has yet to be extended and on the 16th he reports that the battlefields have been well cleared and he saw only 2 dead Canadians, meanwhile progress on the "Standard Gauge (*sic*) Railway" is good.
  - April 20-24 1917 - the railway has made it to the Lens Arras Road
  - Appendix - location of medical units of 1st Canadian Division but no mention of anything in the A.11 sector
  - Appendix Order 106 April 10 1917 - #4 and #5 clearing the battlefields and use tram cars to their fullest extent
  - April 9-11 1917 - important note that it took only a few days to clear the battlefield under direction of "Divisional Salvage Officer" and "Officer in Charge of Graves Location" - we need his report, they will be marked!! Work started on the 12th and 13th to extend the tram lines and roads. We may find a map.
- Provost Marshall
  - April 11 1917 - nothing human but I would like to know where they buried 100 horses - a crater perhaps? Many unburied in forward area - I had not thought of the problem of using GPR and detecting buried horses instead of soldiers!
  - April 18 1917 - not related to CA40 but an interesting report on a suicide which is not fully disclosed in the COD file
- Administrative Staff



- April 16-17 1917 - tram line completed to Bois Carre (that is at 51b.B.7.c) so well past the burial area. Road and tram lines extended further on the 20th to 28th.
- Appendix (page 1 & page 2) - I am confused here, although I did read about the light casualties at the start of the action. Are these only in the Administrative Branch - can't be as they peak top 209 and 222 on the 12th and 13th. Were the casualties really that light on the 9th?
- Horses - 669 would have been buried - where?
- Appendix A - extension of tram lines 5,000 yards
- Clearing the Battlefield - Lt. Adams is the Divisional Burial Officer and there will be a [separate paper with instructions](#) - both Canadian and Germans cleared.
- Identity Discs - sadly they removed them and the papers thus may be unknowns
- **CLEARING OF THE BATTLEFIELD** - Lt. Adams and Corps Burial Officer Captain Grainger - code HOUDAIN - use special stretchers and clear quickly - burial officer to mark graves and collection of personal effects
- General Staff
  - April 12 1917 - 2nd Brigade HQ past Nine Elms in Sector A.18 at Posen Haus
  - April 14 1917 - 400 men of 1st Brigade sent to 172nd Coy Royal Engineers to work on roads at **51b.A11.a.9.9**
  - Bentata Subway Markings - red and white poles, in the event we find photographs
  - April 7 1917 - Raid on VISSEC Crater by 16th Battalion, enemy wire at 51b.A.10.c.7.7 - **so that marks the location**
  - April 9 1917 6 am - **16th Battalion** well past the A10 craters and some distance to the south at **51b.A10.c.25.35**
  - April 9 1917 6:30 am - Black Line captured by 3rd Brigade
  - [at 4103 of 5043 = 940 pages left to read!](#)
  - April 9 1917 - in the Swischen Stellung Line
  - Many Pages Later: - Attack of April 9 1917 and I thought we had reached the end - 6:15 am the 16th is going well, feeble retaliation (not massive slaughter)- this detail goes on for several pages and reports quick progress - there is a lot of detail in here for those that have the interest, but that is all for me as no more CA40 news!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Jan 18, 2016 12:37 pm**

I have agreed to Richard's suggestion to contact the CWGC and "submit a formal presentation of your case as a factual analysis of all the issues."

But I disagreed on one point - this is *our* case!

Any member who has posted to this thread has contributed to the discovery. We know who you are!

**EDIT: Any member with an interest is welcome to be included - you do not need to have posted to this thread.**

We would not be here today without your assistance - I am truly grateful to you all.

If you agree, please forward me your contact info so you may be included in the request....full name and email is sufficient.

We have strength in numbers!

Thanks again to all of you - Ted

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Mon Jan 18, 2016 3:53 pm**

***rlaughton wrote:***

April 18 1917 - not related to CA40 but an interesting report on a suicide which is not fully disclosed in the COD file.

The newspaper report I submitted to his CVWM entry also does not mention suicide - his mother received official word that he had been gassed and died.

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **vimyboy**Posted: **Mon Jan 18, 2016 10:08 pm**

Richard;

I'm sure you have the war diaries of the Chief Engineer of the Canadian Corps in you sites. There is a huge amount of information on the roads, tramlines, water supply before, during and after the battle. They make reference to the tram lines removing most of the wounded from the battlefield and of linking up with the German railways, etc. There are maps with the tram lines as well as references to map coordinates and trench locations.

War Diaries Chief Engineer Canadian Corps

I will be going through the file over the next few days looking for tidbits.

Brad

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **rlaughton**Posted: **Tue Jan 19, 2016 6:34 am**

Brad:

No I did not - you are on the cusp! I had to shorten your link, it was too long.

I mined it and put it in the folder as a single PDF file with the others:

[https://www.mediafire.com/folder/y1c4dh ... April\\_1917](https://www.mediafire.com/folder/y1c4dh...April_1917)

I will convert the negative images of the maps to positives and reload those this morning.

**done:** Chief Engineer Canadian Corps April 1917 Optimized

Thanks for sharing!

Richard

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **rlaughton**Posted: **Tue Jan 19, 2016 9:45 am**

The tramways I now leave to Brad (vimyboy) but Brad's find did release the precise coordinates of all the subways and thus we can take a look back to see exactly where it was located relative to where Ted placed his flag (the orange square at 51b.A10.c.9.7). There is a series of these so here is the KMZ file as well for those that wish to look in the toolbox.

KMZ File Bentata Subways and the Craters

First overlay is just the location of the subway and so the exit is quite a bit south of the crater (51b.A.9.d.75.00 to 51b.A.10.c.75.30). Note that the flag (*small orange square with black centre*) that Ted placed is as we first noted, appears to be more over a trench than a crater. The red dots with the grid markings you see are just to line up the trench map to the exact GPS readings.

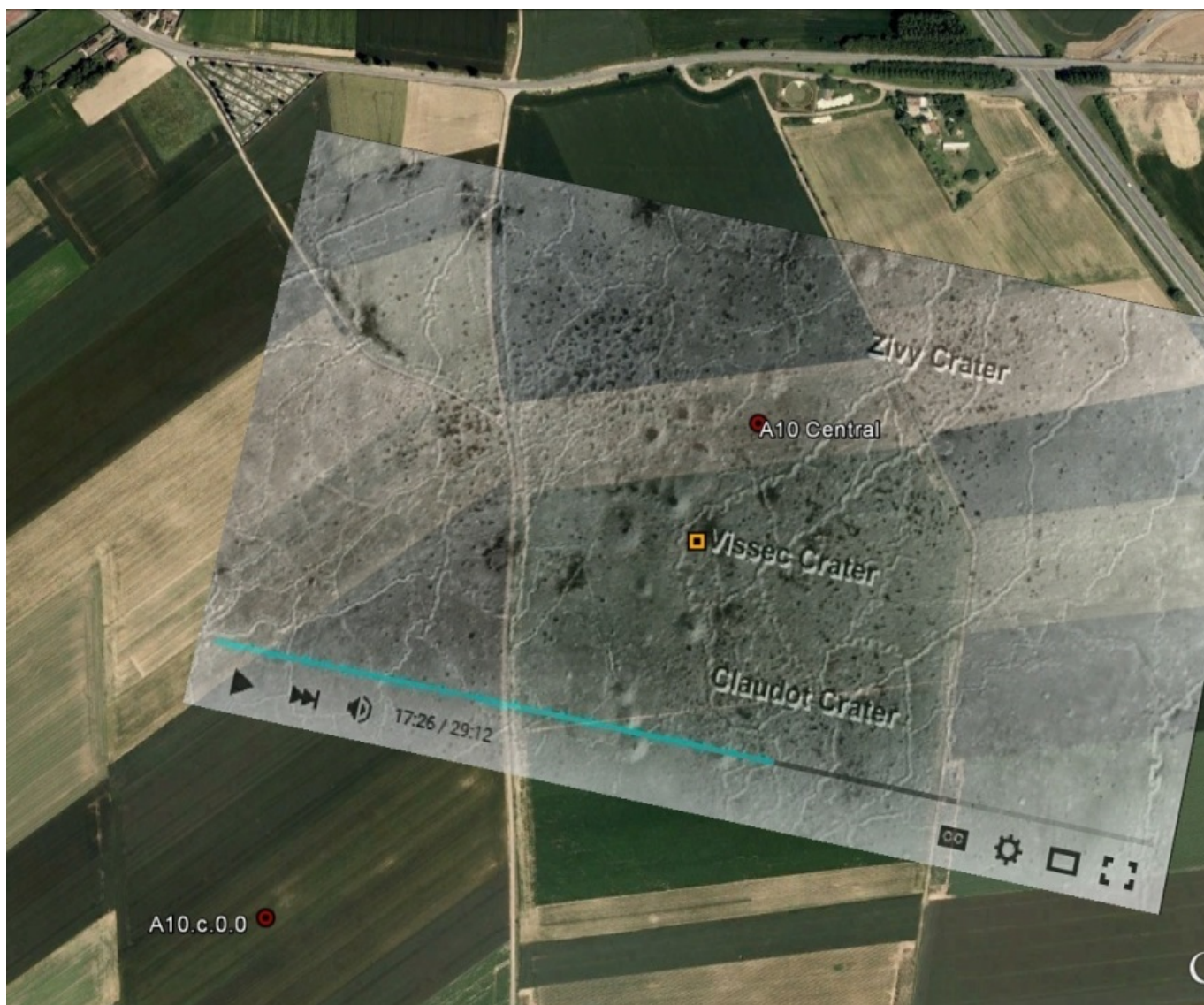
I am not sure if there is enough detail in the war diary to tell if they swung that far north or did they head west when they came out of the subway? You will see that there is another crater directly in front of them but that is not the one that Ted marked.



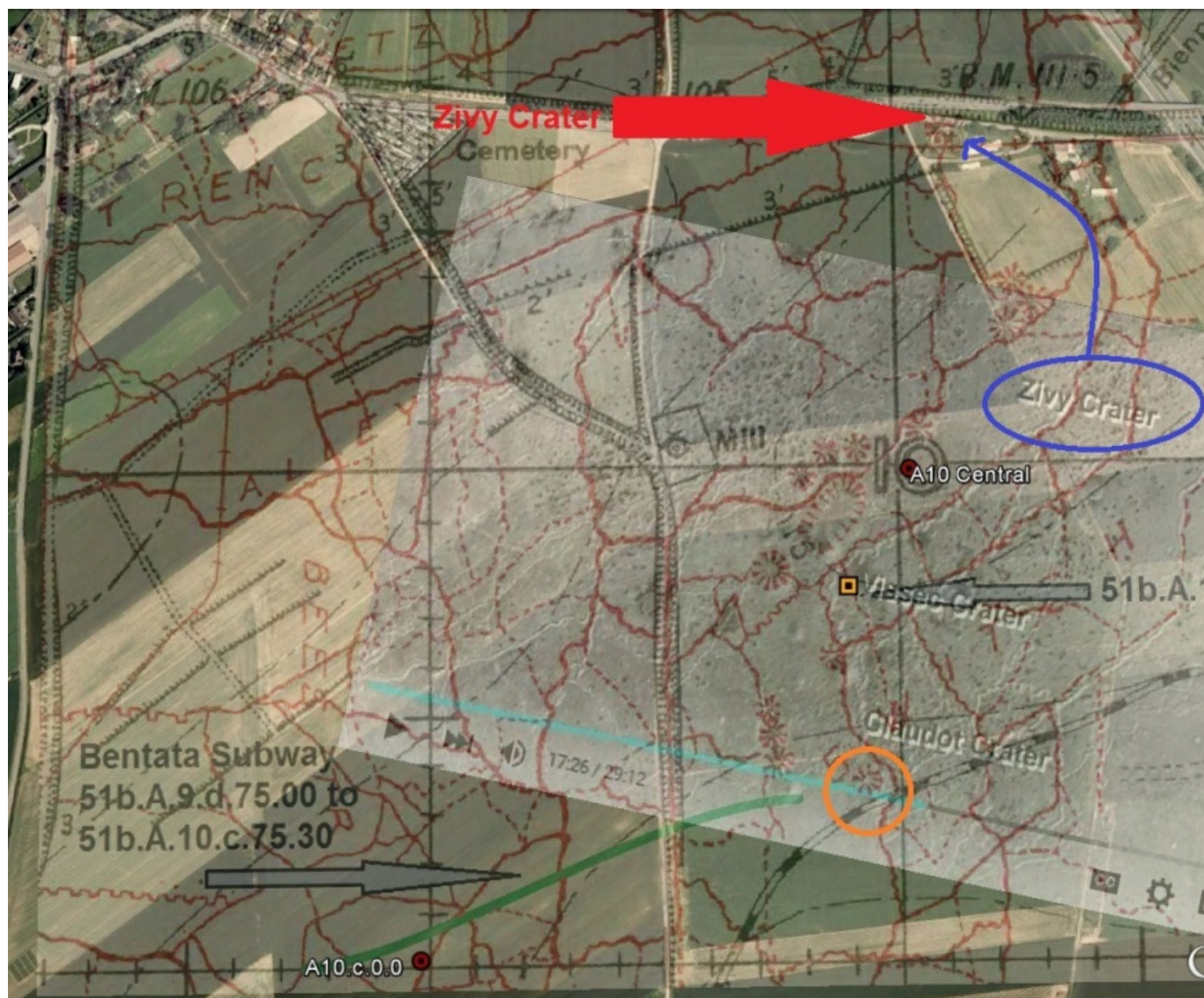
Next let us take a look at the crater locations from the imagery in the video. This was laid up by placing the trench map on GE and then the crater image on top, then removing the trench map. I will put them back together at the end for you to see. I was sure I had this dead wrong, as I could not line up with ZIVY CRATER then I finally realized that is not Zivy Crater as it is marked in the video. You can see that crater on the trench map overlay and Zivy quite a distance to the north.

If you check the lines of both the imagery and the trench map that they line up quite well. They should, as I have to assume they made the trench maps from the aerial photographs.





Now we can put them all together and you tell me if that is where you think the men of the 16th Battalion headed when they came out of the Bentata Subway? I marked the real location of Zivy Crater on this overlay and then I put an orange circle around the crater that I would expect that the men of the 16th Battalion faced when they came out of the tunnel. From that image it appears at about **51b.A.10.c.95.35**. If there were men buried up at the orange block at 10.c.9.7 then that required relocation. Remember, we have never said that there were not bodies there - they did find 4 already and concentrated them in Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension. I believe we are saying, that is not CA40 as described by the CWGC. If I remember correctly, the DURAND GROUP had information on the names of the other craters (*nope, just Zivy*).



All the files from these series of posts, that I produced, remain in the main folder.

Anyone may use them as they wish.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Tue Jan 19, 2016 8:55 pm**

Richard;

I found a map from on the Canada at War website that was an aerial photo of an unknown sector of Vimy Ridge. After playing around with it for a while I realized that it was almost the exact location of Norm's Vimy Ridge Video. I was able to line up most of the crater and my attempt is below as well as the trench map.

Photo: [http://www.canadaatwar.ca/photo/856/bat ... -fighting/](http://www.canadaatwar.ca/photo/856/bat...-fighting/)

Below, is my attempt at placing it on GE. I'm sure someone can do a better job but I think it shows the approximate location of the craters and where we think "Norm's" crater is located. The blue line is a tram line and the red line is the pre-war train line. I have included a kmz for both the photo and my map. I hope the links work. If not, please let me know.



[http://www.mediafire.com/download/meevh ... raters.kmz](http://www.mediafire.com/download/meevh...raters.kmz)

[http://www.mediafire.com/download/d3ng1 ... my+Map.kmz](http://www.mediafire.com/download/d3ng1...my+Map.kmz)

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

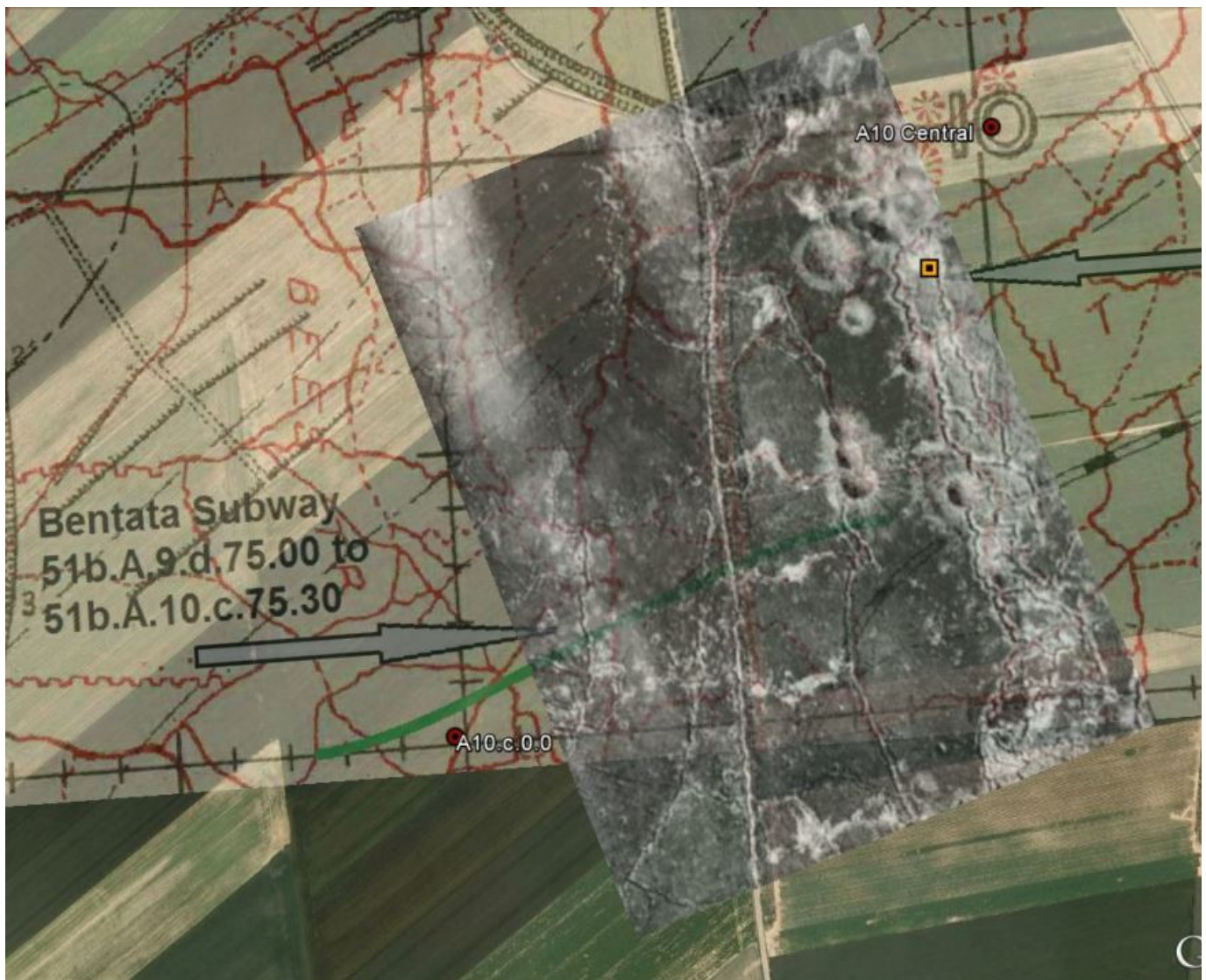
Posted: **Wed Jan 20, 2016 8:51 am**

I agree, you have identified an otherwise unknown aerial photograph. I have seen that before - thought it was at the CWM but I don't see it there or on LAC. There must be a complete set somewhere, maybe at the CWM - just not on-line. That is 16A 26 and the one in Philip Robinson's Book (Durand Group) is 16A\_259 for La Folie.

The KMZ with the picture gave me the "big red **X**", which usually means the image itself was not in the package, although the size was correct.

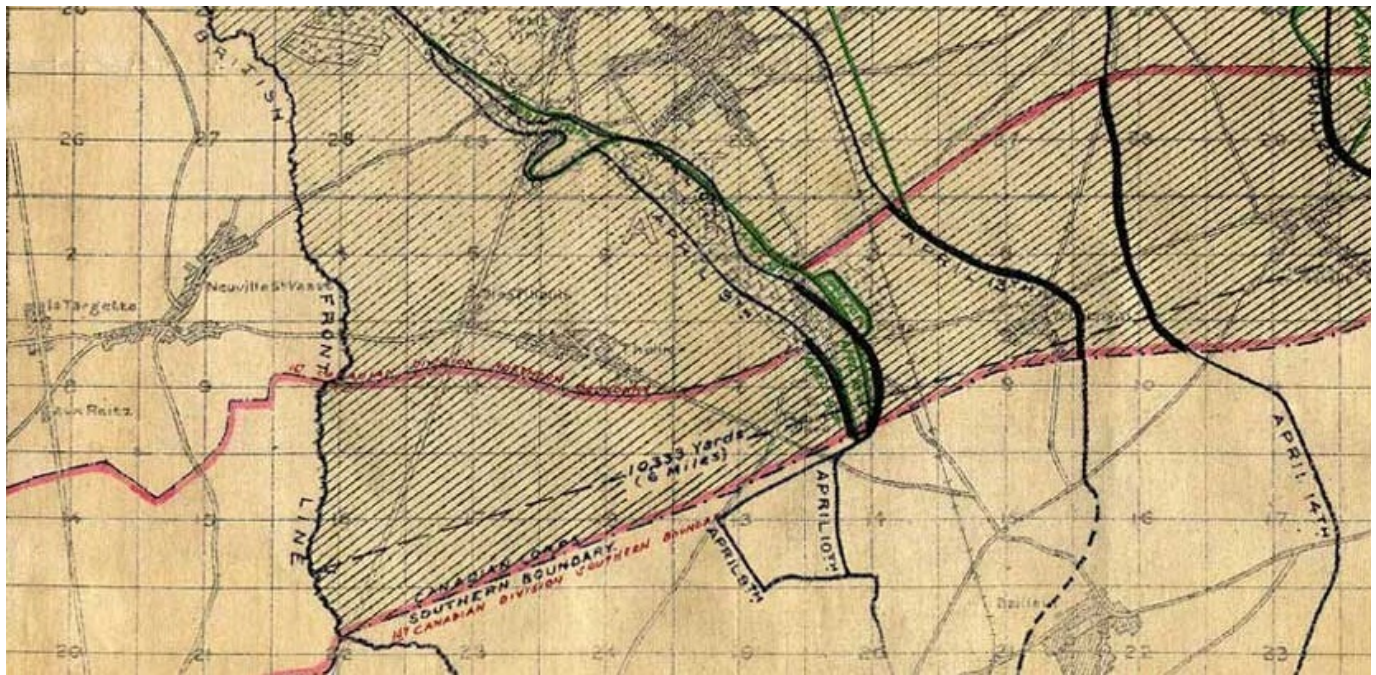
You teased me, so I took the NE sector only and put it on the area where I had marked the Bentata Subway and they are exact match, and a much better image than we had before. Of importance here is that you can clearly see the "white area" where Ted placed the flag (*the small orange square*) in the field and it is not a crater. It made me think about the image I posted a few days ago of the trench burial with the railway car - is it possible that is actually a photograph of the grave we are looking for and is it at that white location? Not a crater and not CA40 but it might be a burial area. We do know they took 4 bodies from there to Lievin.





I found a better trench map showing the craters, so I have put it in the IWM Maps MediaFire Folder. It is not used here in these images.

While poking around looking for the other aerial photograph at the IWM I noticed this map showing the advance points by date. This may be useful in our analysis. This is an extract for the 1st Division - both versions are in a folder on MediaFire CWM Folder.



Today's prize will go to whomever finds the aerial photographs for sector **51.b.A.11** where Ted has pointed out the most logical place for CA40, as described by the CWGC. They are probably out there somewhere as they would have continued taking photographs as they advanced on Farbus and Willerval. I wonder if they have them at the Imperial War Museum (on-line collection) or the UK National Archives? The on-line set at the IWM has 26,567 images and a lot appear to be WWI, but unidentified.

Here is a good example and it might be a match as it shows the RED LINE, which was ZWISCHEN STELLUNG which went right through **51b.A.11.d** where we are looking.

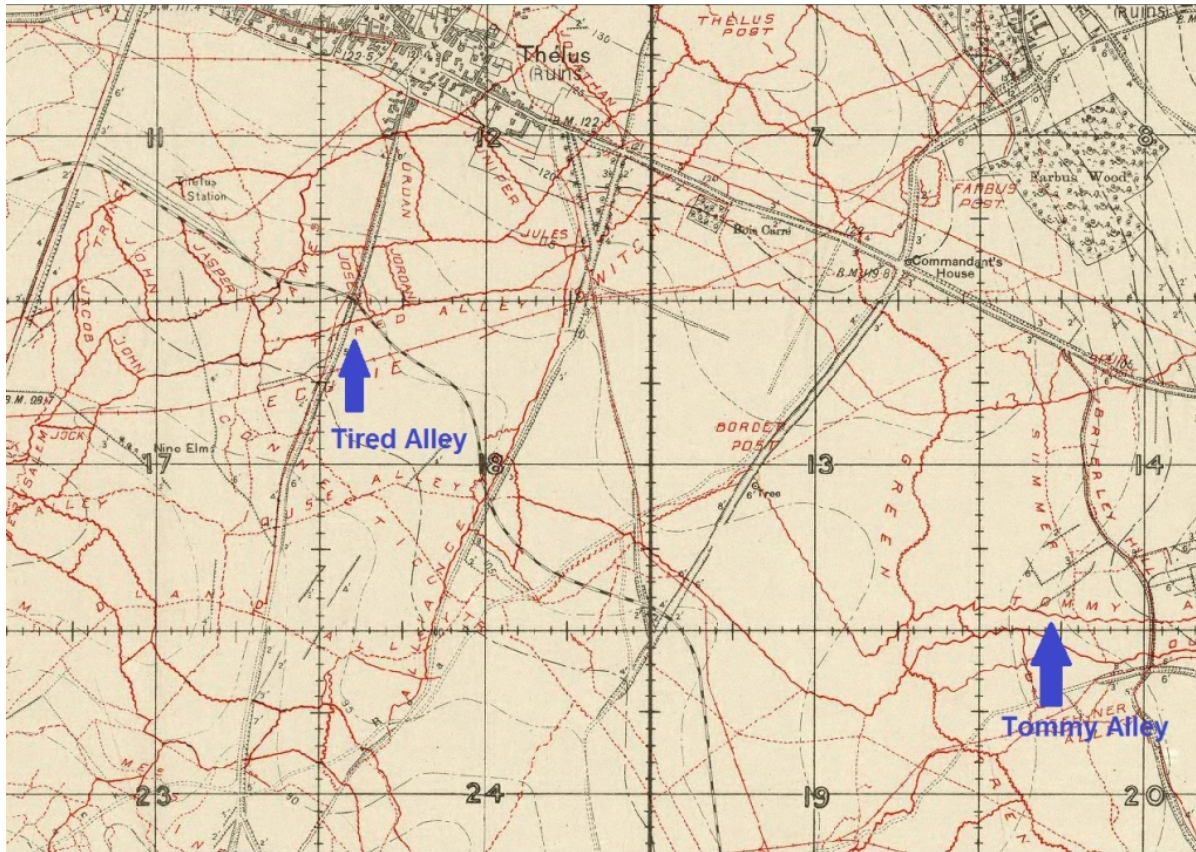
<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205022507>





Hudson and Ottawa trenches are in 36c.T.23.b and 36c.T.28.c so not on the map below. It is a task sorting out the trench names as they switch from the former German names to the Canadian names. It looks like the small piece in 51b.A.11.d is just off this aerial or on the edge.





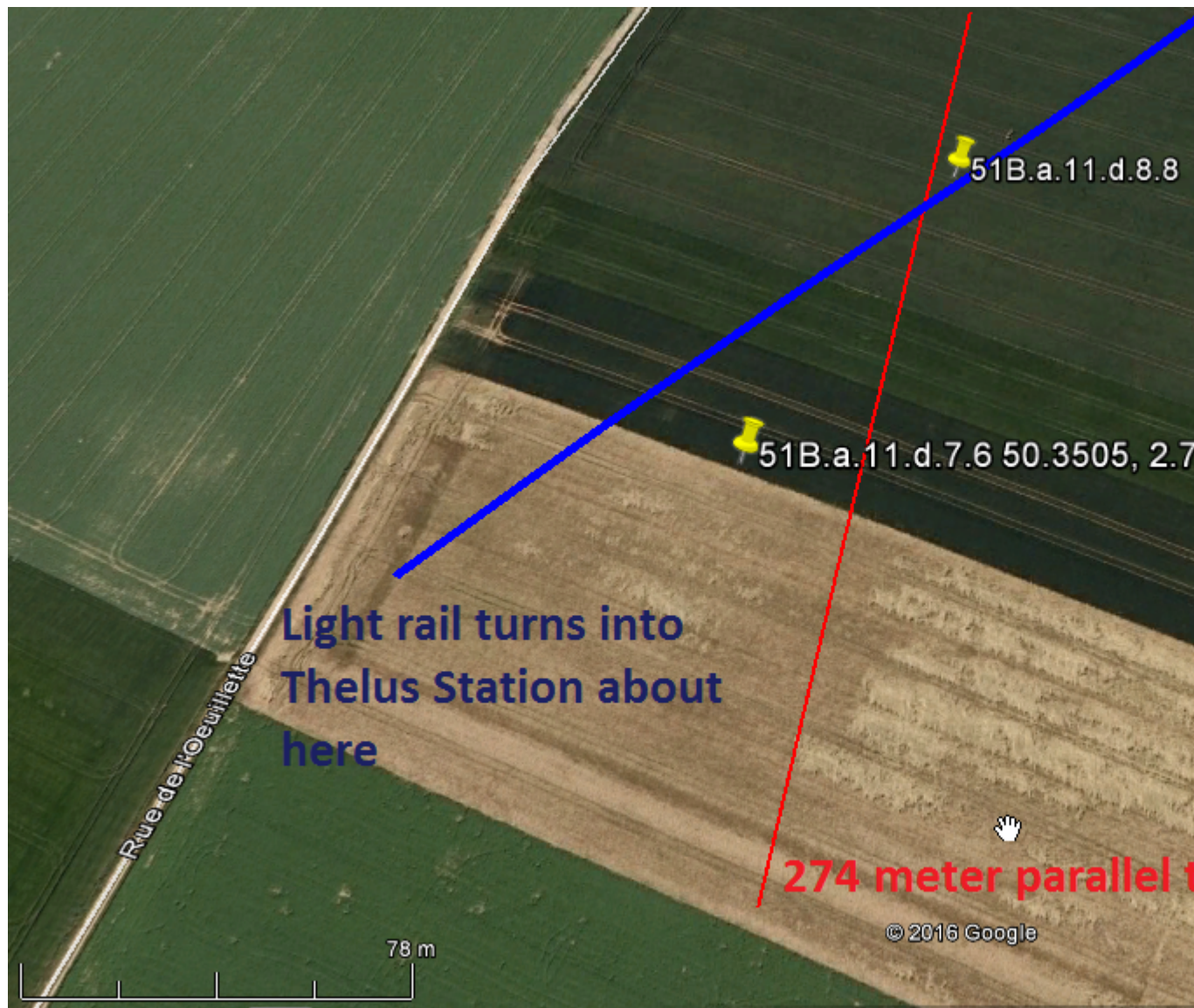
by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jan 20, 2016 8:28 pm**

And, I have to amend your estimate of the "274-meter parallel" and therefore declare your estimate of **51B.a.11.d.8.8** to be a more accurate estimation of the burial site of 44 men of the 16th Infantry Battalion.

You can see my estimate 51B.a.11.d.7.6 leaned a little towards the light rail line and is not nearly as close as yours to the 274-meter parallel.

**Your estimate could hardly be more accurate...at the intersection of the 274-meter parallel and the light rail line.**



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jan 20, 2016 10:13 pm**

I had a quick review of some previous posts and there were comments wondering about water in the trenches at the time of the attack. I found a footnote in Hugh Urquhart's history of the 16th Battalion (1932) page 213 stating:

*"These mine craters were blown by the French. They were known as the Claudot and Vissec groups. Some of them were as deep as twenty feet with sides of greasy chalk sloping down to six or seven feet of slimy water. The enemy held the far side of the craters."*

It's hard to believe that any burial party would dump soldiers into such a morass and hope to bury them with dirt. It would end up being a soupy mess with little chance of recovery.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Wed Jan 20, 2016 11:01 pm**

Very interesting work gentlemen!



Do we have other instance of men being buried in craters and any details of how they were buried?

As above, it seems very unlikely bodies would be put into the bottom of a water-filler crater; might they be buried around the inside rim? The virtue of a crater as a mass grave is that it probably wouldn't be blown a second time, and would provide some shelter for graves and grave markers. More importantly, it would be almost impossible(!) to lose track of if later exhumation was intended from the start.

Of course if you have a very large shell hole in the area of true mine craters, it might well be called a "crater" when it was not.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jan 21, 2016 9:54 am**

1. I have not seen the text "Hugh Urquhart's history of the 16th Battalion". Is there any additional detail on the movement of the 16th on April 9-14 and in particular if they went back to recover bodies. The 16th war diary does not have the detail of some of the others.
2. Both the Zivy Crater (53 men) and the Lichfield Crater (57 men) are burial grounds. Norm Christie's text says they were truncated and landscaped after the war. I have never seen any information to detail whether they were dry (or pumped out) prior to the burial. I just can't imagine them dumping the men in a water filled crater!
3. From the beginning we have been saying that if the **51b.A.10.c.9.7** site is a burial ground it is not a crater. Based on the grid references, the craters are 75 to 100 yards to the west of the "white depression" in the field that Ted marked. If this was a burial site, I suspect it was a trench.
4. You will recall that 4 bodies were recovered from this area and concentrated in the Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension in 1920. A broken cross was recovered, from which only one name could be read. There is nothing to say if this cross had just the 4 names on it or 44. I have not seen anything that states that a "crater was excavated to find these men", the only references are to a battlefield grave.

The image of the concentration report for the 4 men that were recovered and buried at Lievin is important. It only says the cross was "over the grave of the above four soldiers" and that it was "in memory of the under mentioned soldiers". If the cross had been kept, it would be important to know if it was large enough to have 44 names listed in the format "No. 859684 Pte. R. Owen".

It is the file of Private Robert Owen #859684 that I believe creates the greatest controversy of this case. The "Circumstance of Death File" clearly states that there was a registered grave at **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. If we then move on to the Form E13 (War Grave Register) we see it says "Grave No. C. A. 40" and that it is in "Loc. **36c.A.10.c.9.7**". We know that the "36c" (or 44a elsewhere) is incorrect and that the reference was modified before the entry on the COD file. If you look at the E13 for Private Bradshaw you will see that the 36c was stroked out and changed to 51b. The problem is however that there are too many cards that conflict with the description.

If you look at the earlier post about Pte. Brown, you will see that he was found with 2 others and they were all concentrated at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. They were reported on the E13 registers to have been buried at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** but because they were exhumed, we know that they were really buried at **51b.A11.a.7.6** and not at the location of the reported "A10 Crater" or "A10 Trench". Interestingly now, I see that is also near a "Light Rail Line" and it is close to where we believe that most of the men were buried at 51b.A.11.d.8.8, as we believe is meant by the CWGC report (*GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917*). In as much as they reported "36c" instead of "51b" it is quite possible they reported "a.7.6" instead of "d.7.6", as Ted first proposed. We now agree that "d.7.6" is probably "d.8.8" or somewhere in between that narrow area. The case of Private Brown and his 2 pals (McGray and Clark), who were found at **51b.A.11.a.7.6** within a group of 41 Canadian Soldiers (2681061 and 2681062) tells us that was a large burial plot and not related to the



A10 site as reported on the E13 form. He was exhumed from the same burial location of Pte. Charles Searle #736486, also of the 16th Bn, also killed on April 9, 1917. This might be CB10 (see list of burial sites).

Putting this all together clearly tells us we can not rely on what is written on the forms, there are too many that are incorrect. We have never said there are not men buried at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 but there is considerable evidence that bodies were collected by the burial parties, primarily the 13th Battalion, and concentrated into battlefield graves. One of those might be a trench, not a crater, at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 (where Ted placed the flag) and another might be the one described by the CWGC at 51b.A.11.d.8.8. There is no conclusive evidence that there are 44 men buried in a crater within the 51b.A.10 sector. The crater would be at about 51b.A.10.c.7.8.

Remember that it is the CWGC records that tell us the 44 men of the 16th Battalion are buried 274 metres west of the main road by the light rail line. We did not create that information, it was in the historical records.

I, like many others, took a 6 month sabbatical from this topic from May 2015 to late December 2015. I returned to this thread with one purpose *"to corroborate the findings of Norm Christie"* and to initiate a local fund raising effort in support of his project. We want to find the burial site of Milton Soldier **Private Frederick Baguley #718192**, 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion. Unfortunately what I discovered was that there were more questions than answers. There are questions on all sides of the issue. I had to conclude that the time is not yet right to begin an extensive and expensive sub-surface investigation until the "assumptions" are removed from the equation and "facts" are consolidated. Where I personally stand on this now is as follows, and I stand to be corrected by anyone at anytime:

1. I believe that there are approximately 40 men of the 16th Battalion unaccounted for on April 9, 1917. I have not checked into how many others may be scattered across this area of the Arras battlefield - we should determine that number.
2. These men may be buried in a number of isolated grave sites across the 1st Canadian Division Sector or they may be concentrated in a few larger burial sites built during the battlefield clearing process. We need to identify all of these sites and apply a ranking system to narrow down the search to the most probable sites.
3. The location that is often referenced as a crater at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 may be a large trench but it is not a crater. There is no evidence that proves that there are 40 or men buried at that location and conversely there is no evidence that proves there are no men buried at that location.
4. A number of men have already been exhumed from the A10 location, with some concentrated in Nine Elms and some in Lievin. There were no reports that these men were exhumed from a crater.
5. The question as to the location of CA40 at the 274 metre (300 yard) mark west of the main road near the light rail line is a historical statement, apparently written at the time of the concentrations. If the statement is correct, there are a few locations where this might be and the most obvious at this time is at 51b.A.11.d.8.8.
6. To move to the next phase of the on-site investigations, we need to consult with geotechnical experts in that area of France, or elsewhere, that have knowledge of undertaking GPR or EM investigations in a chalk substrate that has been drastically altered by warfare. It may be those are not the appropriate tools. We must also know the limitations (i.e. depth) of these investigations in this mixed substrate.
7. If there are tools that are available for a low cost examination using surface based equipment (i.e. no excavations) then a plan should be put in place for the areas (not a single area) where the investigations should be undertaken. This should be a "technical investigation" and not a "publicity investigation".
8. Considerable thought must be given, prior to the initiation of the project, how to deal with the expected large number of "positive hits" that would arise from a surface based examination. We know that there are going to be many large deposits, with a large portion of those being inorganic (i.e. ordnance, equipment). We also know now there are going to be large deposits of organic material (i.e. 600 horses were buried). The experts will be able to guide the team on what is the

best equipment and procedure to deal with these issues, or they may say it is impossible. Better we know that from the start!

9. The results of any investigations must be made available to any and all investors in the project, which itself must be guided by the investors, not by a single individual. This must be a "science based project" if there is to be any hope that the results will be accepted by those involved.
0. Once the preliminary findings have been collected and evaluated, a determination can be made as to whether it is appropriate to go on to the next phase. I see no reason this can not be a "team investigation". A proper - transparent - business structure will expedite the collection of the funds necessary to undertake this project.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jan 21, 2016 4:29 pm**

I found a listing of material held at the University of Victoria relating to the 16th Battalion during WW1 with aerial photographs, orderers, personnel records, maps, nominal rolls, etc. A link is provided below. I have left a message with their Special Collections department for guidance and I may pop over and have a look (short ferry ride from my home).

[https://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/h ... entory.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/h...entory.pdf)

An online version of Hugh Urquhart's History of the 16th Battalion can be found on the following link.

[http://contentdm.ucalgary.ca/cdm/ref/co ... h/id/30480](http://contentdm.ucalgary.ca/cdm/ref/co...h/id/30480)

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 22, 2016 7:30 am**

Thanks Brad - too bad the 16th History is not on archive.org in other formats - at least I could not find it! That version at Calgary is tough to read.

There is an interesting selection of aerial photographs at the Victoria site - would love to find ones of the battlefield as they moved from the A10 sector to Farbus Wood and Willerval.

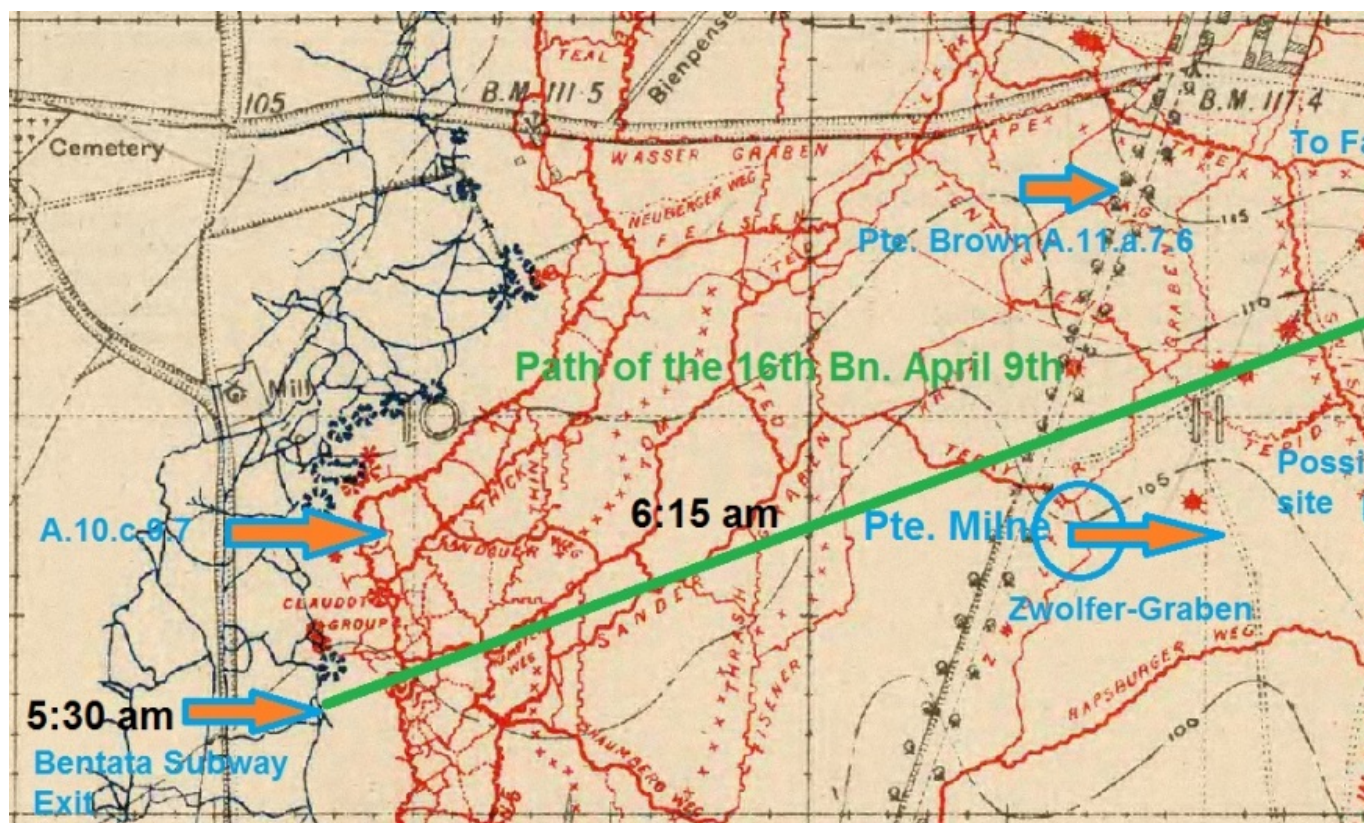
On the matter of Farbus Wood, I am intrigued by the records for **Private Herbert Allen #420819**. Although it records he was killed on the 9th April, at Farbus Wood, it reports that he too was buried at the A.10.c.9.7 burial site. That I believe is unrealistic, as he would have been well past that area and it is unlikely that they would have taken him back to that area for burial, particularly since it was the 13th Battalion that was then providing the battlefield clearance and burial. This is almost a duplicate of the issue that we had with **Private James Brown #160741** who we already know was reported buried at that location, but was not. The same goes for **Private William Milne, V.C. #427586** who is also reported buried back at the A.10 area, although it was recorded that he was already 100 yards past the Arras-Lens Road at the *Zwölfer-Graben* (A.11.c.00.35 to A.11.a.95.65) (Nicholson page 254). Since he was killed later that day, we can assume that he progressed further past that point. The Arras-Lens road cuts through A.11.a central and A.11.c central, so he was approaching Ted's proposed site in the 51b.A.11.d sector. Brown, if you recall, was exhumed from the 51b.A.11.b central sector.

1. NO. 420819	2. RANK OR RATING Private	3. SURNAME ALLEN	4. CHRISTIAN NAME Herbert William
5. UNIT OR SHIP 16th Battalion	6. DATE OF CASUALTY 9-4-17	7. R.G. FILE NO. 649-A-454	8. RELIGION Church of England
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY "Killed in Action"		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
11. LOCATION OF BODY AT TIME OF CASUALTY Farbus Wood (Vimy Ridge)			
NOTE—Boxes 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. OBJECT	13. LOCATION OF OBJECT	14. GRAVE LOCATION Grave: Plot: Row:	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. REPORTING NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CERTIFY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF BODY			

20. DEPOSITED LOCATION OF GRAVE  
 7½ mile South East of Neuville St. Vaast, 1½ mile North of Arras, France  
 (Grave Registered) No. 366.A.10.c.97.

21. REMARKS  
 13

The men were moving at a fairly good pace that morning, as they were recorded at the Black Line at Z+45 or 6:15 am (still west of the Arras-Lens Road) and after a short pause were at the Red Line (*Zwischen-Stellung*) - well east of the Arras-Lens Road, shortly after 7 am. The Blue Line, east of Thelus was captured by the 1st Division by 11 am. The Brown Line at Farbus Wood was in Canadian hands around 2:40 pm. That left an extensive path where men of the 16th Battalion fell that day, the greatest in the area of the *Zwölfen-Graben* in A.11 central.





I will probably find more that are similar. I believe Ted is looking at these as well. I am seeing a number of these ones listed for the A.10 site where they investigated that site in February 1922 and did not find any graves (i.e. Attwood - all files to date are in C3 Vimy). The ones that I am checked (remarks if checked) are on the 16th Bn. Spreadsheet.

It is also becoming obvious that the men of the 16th Battalion listed on Memorial Cross 9 are not directly related to what the CWGC reports for CA40 on the web site. I had always been focused on the wording for the location of that site and did not pay much attention to the phrase "*Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917*". Looking at these records tells us that there was no knowledge that these men were all buried there, as there is nothing written on many of their sheets. If it had been recorded by the GRU (*Graves Registration Unit*) that they were buried in CA40 then that would have been added to their file. That means we should be able to **exclude any person listed on the spreadsheet as NRB (No Record of Burial)**. The sheet is nothing more than a list of 16th Battalion men that were not recovered on April 9, 1917. Why some were not included, I have yet to uncover (i.e. *Cowper, Harper, McKay, McPhail, Simmonds and Tallman*).

The research this morning also revealed some hidden treasures, for as I was looking at the COD and E13 WGR files for the missing, I saw some keys that suggested I should also be looking more at the ones that were found. There appeared to be inconsistencies in what was being reported for locations:

One of the most interesting observations was the recording of the distances of the graves from Neuville St.Vaast (NSV), as you will recall the early posts regarding the A.10 site referred to areas that were 1/2 mile or 1 mile east of NSV. Those were often mixed with the wording for A.10.c.9.7 and CA40. A good example is the one Norm Christie used in the video (this post). What caught my eye this morning was that two (2) and perhaps many more of the men who had been recovered were also 1/2 mile or 1 mile SE of NSV. A good example is Private McNicol #718887 of the 16th Battalion recorded on this exhumation (2618029) who is now in Nine Elms Military Cemetery 1.D.3. He too was found 1/2 mile SE of NSV but he was exhumed at A.11.d.2.3, the same sector **A.11.d** where the CWGC CA40 is probably located. Guess what his E13 file says? **If you guessed that it said he was buried in CA40 at A.10.c.9.7 you are correct! That gives us positive proof that men that are listed for CA40 at that location are actually buried some distance to the west in the A.11.d sector. You can not get clearer evidence than shown in that file.** We know from our previous list that burial site was known as **C.A.6** not C.A. 40.

Checking the files of the men of the 60th Battalion that went down in 1916 is also important, as their exhumation (2618041) shows they were found very close to the A.10 site at 51b.A.10.c.9.5 (as compared to c.9.7). If you check the records for Major Thorne, Lieutenant Punnett and Private Compton, you will find they were buried in a "trench / shell hole combination" at the end of the Bentata Trench. This is more or less the area where the 16th Battalion came onto No Mans Land on April 9, 1917. That is close to a crater but it is clearly different than the crater northwest of the proposed A.10 burial site at A.10.c.9.7 (that crater is at A.10.c.7.8 ).

The important summary points:

1. We now have 2 known cases where the GRU checked the A.10.c.9.7 area and in the 1st case in May 1921 they found 4 men and moved them to Lieven Communal Cemetery Extension (2020936). In the second case, while checking for Private Attwood #736569 in February 1922 they found no remains whatsoever. I believe that we can conclude from that information that there are unlikely any remains at that site, assuming that a thorough search was done in both cases.
2. We now know that the distances referenced for 1/2 mile from Neuville St.Vaast and references to CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 refer to burial sites much further west in sector 51b.A.11.d. We can no longer assume that a reference to the A.10 site or C.A.40 is correct.
3. Any reference to burial in a large crater in the 51b.A.10.c sector is incorrect. If there were any burials there, then they were to the south at the exit of the Bentata Subway, in a shell hole or a

trench. As that area was extensively searched, to the point that remains from 1916 were found, is a good indication that there are no remains still there at this time.

As always, these are my opinions based on my analysis of the records. Each day we appear to be getting closer to the end but there are still residual issues. I would say the most important information we need now is aerial photographs circa 1917 from sector 51b.A.11. We need to see the rail line and the trenches in that area.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jan 22, 2016 10:37 pm**

Richard, would you let me know when you upload the COG file for Ecoivres?

I am interested in where Lt John Cowan was found.

And, I am interested in Lt John Cowan because he was tasked with establishing a strong-point between 51b.a.11.d.8.7 and 51b.a.11.d.9.7. **EDIT: This area is a German trench shown in the Salvage Area map of the 13th Battalion.**

Yes, you read that right, **51b.a.11.d.8.8** (where we are now looking) is smack dab in the middle, and we can now positively identify it as a destination of **Platoon 9 of the 16th Btn.**

<http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e044/e001095241.jpg>

16th War Diary

What if most of these missing men were in Platoon 9?

Can we identify who was in Platoon 9?

**EDIT: Platoon nine was one of four platoons in 3 Company.**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page **8** of **30**

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jan 23, 2016 7:13 am**

*ejwalshe wrote:*

Yes, you read that right, **51b.a.11.d.8.8** (where we are now looking) is smack dab in the middle, and we can now positively identify it as a destination of **Platoon 9 of the 16th Btn.**

We should plot all those details on the trench map. I went back one page and I see that it tell us we need to find the **Arial Photograph 16.A.487**. Those must be somewhere?

*ejwalshe wrote:*

Richard, would you let me know when you upload the COG file for Ecoivres?

There are none posted.

I know for sure the 8 men of the 5/Gordon Highlanders of the 51st Division were concentrated.

[http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 998144.JPG](http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d...998144.JPG)

But if I use my "CWGC Mining Process" there are no COG-BR documents even for those 8 men.

There are many other cemeteries where the same records are missing.

We could ask the CWGC to release them?

The other possibility is that the documents are "in the Cloud" and someday I may stumble upon them. That has happened in the past.

For example, talk about stumbling onto something! I was looking to see if I could find some other concentrations (check the GRRF for clues) and what do you know but the 6 men of the 60th Bn. killed in the H.Q. Dug-Out are listed in Ecoivres Military Cemetery with more details:



13/2/18. Army Form W3372.

FIRST ARMY. GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

REPORT No. 3. SCHEDULE No. 43.C.

Commune: MONT ST. ELOY. Comprehensive Report.

PLACE OF BURIAL: Ecceivres Military Cemetery.

Map ref. Sheet 51c. F.14.a.4.9.8.

Land belongs to: This cancels Schedule No. 64 of previous Report.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or Despatched	Map Reference
IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS & MEN OF THE 60th CANADIAN BATTALION KILLED IN THE H.Q. DUG-OUT OF A. COY. ON NOVEMBER 26th 1916 AND BURIED IN THE FRONT LINE OPPOSITE THE LEFT END OF BENTATA TRENCH AT Sheet 51b. A.10.c.73.05.						
	457229	Major S. L. THORNE				
	139515	Lieut. H.G. PUNNETT				
	123698	Pte. W.F. GODBEER				
	201344	Pte. G. BROWNLEE				
		Pte. W. MOIR				
		Pte. H. COMPTON				

The graves of the abovenamed Officers and Men are reported on First Army Serial No. 1058.

ENTERED. a 1 23-3-18  
SUPS CHECKED. RB 24/21

NEAR GRAVE  
REMARK PHOTO

6315) W8219-M961 20,000 10/16 HWV(P237A) Forms/W8372/1  
12894-M1903 30,000 1/17

So that is before they found them and moved them to Nine Elms.

That says they were buried at 51b.A.10.c.73.05 but they were exhumed at 51b.A10.c.9.5 so that tells us a little about the variation in the reported burial versus exhumation coordinates:

REF MAP 51b 1/40000

CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS

Burial Return.

NUMBER. 19. 9/5/19.

"A"

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial: NINE ELMS.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.	Remarks.
1	E	11	A 10 a 2.8.	NO	NIL	NO	Found in Grave with 8 French. Recognized by uniform and equipment.
1	E	12	A 10 c 9.5.	YES	60th Canadian Infantry. Sacred to the Memory of Major S.L. Thorne. Lt. H.G. Punnett. 457229 Pte. W.F. Godbeer. 139515 " G. Brownlee. 201344 " H. Compton. 123698 " W. Moir. Killed in Action Nov 26 1916. Buried at this spot. R.I.P.	NO	

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

Form 3000. Price, A.P. & S.S. - 2/11/19 - 1916.

I have often wondered about these map coordinates. Very dependent on the skill, interest, time available and distractions present when taken. Taking accurate compass bearings with all the ferrous metal on and about a soldier must have been very difficult. Some burial locations must have been nothing more than paced out distances from recognizable objects, some compass bearings and some located using actual maps.

Whether there is any way to tell which was which at this distance of time I don't know.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jan 24, 2016 9:53 am**

I am going to try and finish the list of the burial spots this morning as more and more of them are showing that men were buried "upon reaching the Objective" yet presumably buried back at the "jump off" position at A.10.c.9.7. I will post a few examples here and add to the list which is here:

16th Battalion Spreadsheet April 9, 1917

All the COD and E13 WGR files are here.

Just click on these to make them full scale:

Pte. Blaik - killed at objective and then reported buried back at the start?

The image shows two pages of a military record form. The left page is a form with various fields for personal and service information. The right page is a map showing the approximate location of the burial.

**Left Page (Form):**

- 1. NO.:** 736100
- 2. NAME OF BATTALION:** Private
- 3. NAME OF COMPANY:** BLAISE
- 4. NAME OF REGIMENT:** George Palmer
- 5. NAME OF BATTALION:** 16th Battalion
- 6. NAME OF COMPANY:** 9-17
- 7. NAME OF REGIMENT:** 64th (Central Postal Directory) Battalion
- 8. NAME OF BATTALION:** Presbyterian
- 9. NAME OF COMPANY:** Presbyterian
- 10. NAME OF REGIMENT:** Presbyterian
- 11. NAME OF BATTALION:** Presbyterian
- 12. NAME OF COMPANY:** Presbyterian
- 13. NAME OF REGIMENT:** Presbyterian
- 14. NAME OF BATTALION:** Presbyterian
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Pte. Boniver - says buried at Nine Elms and A.10 location, maybe just a reference to the cross?

All done - what is below is just the image - the spreadsheet link is above. You can see this has 41 references to CA40 or that location, no matter where the body was actually located. Click it twice to see it larger.



surname	forename	initials	age	death	rank	#	On Cross 9	Details
ADAMOVICH	LESAR (LAZAR)	L	42	09-04-17	Private	'736633'		NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge in A10 to A.11.b and d
ALLEN	HERBERT WILLIAM	H W		09-04-17	Private	'420819'	x	KIA Farbus Woods: Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9
ARMITAGE	JOHN ALBERT	J A		09-04-17	Private	'625286'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
ATTWOOD	LAUNCELOT MAURICE	L M	30	09-04-17	Private	'736569'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 - grave not located
BAGULEY	FREDERICK	F		09-04-17	Private	'718192'	x	My Milton Soldier: KIA FARBUS but reported at A.10
BALL	EDWIN VERE	E V	36	09-04-17	Private	'700410'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
BETHEL	WILLIAM EDLEY	W E	22	09-04-17	Private	'719115'		NRB: MIA then KIA
BETTS	ERNEST EARL	E E	28	09-04-17	Private	'736746'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
BLAIK	GEORGE FALCONER	G F	37	09-04-17	Private	'736108'	x	KIA at Objective: but reported in CA40 as well ??
BONIVER	LOUIS	L		09-04-17	Private	'871504'	x	Nine Elms and A.10 listed - maybe just reference to
BRADSHAW	ROBERT EDWARD	R E	29	09-04-17	Private	'43945'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine
BROWN	JAMES	J		09-04-17	Private	'718661'	x	Clearer note - "Memorial No. 9 to above and others"
CHANDLER	REGINALD	R	35	09-04-17	Lance Corporal	'28823'	x	"Memorial No. 9 to above and others" - says does not
CLEMONS	WALTER	W	23	09-04-17	Private	'721564'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
COOK	JOHN ROBERT	J R		09-04-17	Private	'872090'	x	KIA and Vimy Memorial
COWPER	JAMES ALEXANDER	J A	36	09-04-17	Corporal	'420717'		NRB: MIA then KIA (A.36 #10177)
CURLEY	HOWARD FRANKLIN	H F		09-04-17	Private	'258460'	x	NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge
DICKSON	WILLIAM FRANCIS	W F	26	09-04-17	Private	'160168'	x	KIA instant shell fire - CA40 listing as others
GIBBONS	JOHN HAGEN PERCY (PERRY)	J H P	20	09-04-17	Private	'624801'	x	CA40 listing as others
GLASSFORD	RICHARD ARTHUR	R A	20	09-04-17	Private	'722078'	x	Registered 51b.A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.6
GOODING	CYRIL ARTHUR	C A	19	09-04-17	Private	'736317'	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to
GORRIE	JOHN	J	21	09-04-17	Private	'718755'	x	NRB: Attack on Vimy Ridge - machine gun fire
HALLIDAY	FREDERICK JAMES	F J	28	09-04-17	Private	'624957'	x	NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
HAMILTON	WILLIAM	W	31	09-04-17	Sergeant	'A/20408'	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to
HARPER	REGINALD DAVID	R D	23	09-04-17	Private	'722256'		NRB: attack near Vimy (A.645 Sh. 1 #20047)
HAWKINS	ARTHUR JOHNSON	A J	33	09-04-17	Private	'736103'	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
HENDERSON	WILLIAM ARTHUR	W A	31	09-04-17	Private	'105644'	x	NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
HOOPER	WALTER HAROLD	W H	25	09-04-17	Private	'736880'	x	At Vimy Ridge 44a.A10.c.9.7 Grave No. C.A.40 (A.65)
HOWIE	JAMES	J		09-04-17	Lance Corporal	'628188'	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
KILCUP	HUPERT LANSDOWN	H L	29	09-04-17	Private	'832135'	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
KIRBY	ALFRED JAMES	A J	26	09-04-17	Private	'718249'	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
LATIMER	ARCHIBALD	A		09-04-17	Lance Corporal	'426344'	x	Buried near where he fell in "No Man's Land" (A.637
LAYCOCK	WILLIAM WILKINSON	W W	36	09-04-17	Lance Corporal	'70022'	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 (A.652 #26803)
LEITCH	SANFORD WESLEY	S W	23	09-04-17	Private	'736651'	x	CA40 at jump off
MANNING	FRANCIS JAMES	F J		09-04-17	Private	'718699'	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
MILNE, V.C.	WILLIAM JOHNSTONE	W J	24	09-04-17	Private	'427586'	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (A.638 #3)
MCCANDLESS	THOMAS	T	32	09-04-17	Private	'736171'	x	CA40 corrected to 51b
MCCOWAN	DUNCAN	D		09-04-17	Private	'420765'	x	CA40 corrected to 51b from attack southwest of Vir
McKAY	SPURGEON	S	40	09-04-17	Private	'736402'		NRB: attack at Vimy Ridge (A.643 #30677)
McPHAIL	ROBERT	R		09-04-17	Lance Corporal	'426601'		NRB: attack southeast of Neuville St.Vaast (A.636 A.)
McWILLIAMS	HENRY	H		09-04-17	Private	'718526'	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
OWEN	ROBERT	R	29	09-04-17	Private	'859684'	x	Attack west of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.637 #36966)
PARSONS	ALFRED HAROLD	A H		09-04-17	Private	'624593'	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
PATTISON	ROBERT	R	23	09-04-17	Private	'718269'	x	KIA at jump-off location: Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PHILLIPS	FRANK VERNON	F V		09-04-17	Private	'105741'	x	KIA; west of Thelus corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PIPER	GEORGE BROWN	G B	21	09-04-17	Private	'736967'	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.639 #38
POWELL	LEVI GEORGE	L G	43	09-04-17	Private	'737084'	x	KIA: 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PURNELL	WALTER	W		09-04-17	Private	'700967'	x	KIA SE NSV 51b.A10.c.9.7
RUDDOCK	ARTHUR FORBES	A F	19	09-04-17	Private	'129200'	x	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - later corrected to 51b
SIMMONDS	GEORGE HENRY	G H	37	09-04-17	Private	'736075'		NRB: (A.636 #43642)
SIMMONS	IRWIN HOWARD	I H		09-04-17	Sergeant	'77309'	x	KIA: Neuville St.Vaast - Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
SNELGROVE	THOMAS ALBAN	T A	23	09-04-17	Private	'624477'	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
SPALDING	JAMES	J		09-04-17	Private	'874370'	x	NRB: KIA
STRICKLER	JOSEPH MARKS	J M	19	09-04-17	Private	'625303'	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
TALLMAN	ALBERT ELLERY	A E		09-04-17	Private	'859301'		NRB: MIA then KIA (A81 #46831)
TARLTON	ROBERT AUGUSTUS	R A		09-04-17	Private	'129336'	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
WILLERTON	JOSEPH	J		09-04-17	Private	'719161'	x	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - photo of cross sent to family Vancouver

49

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

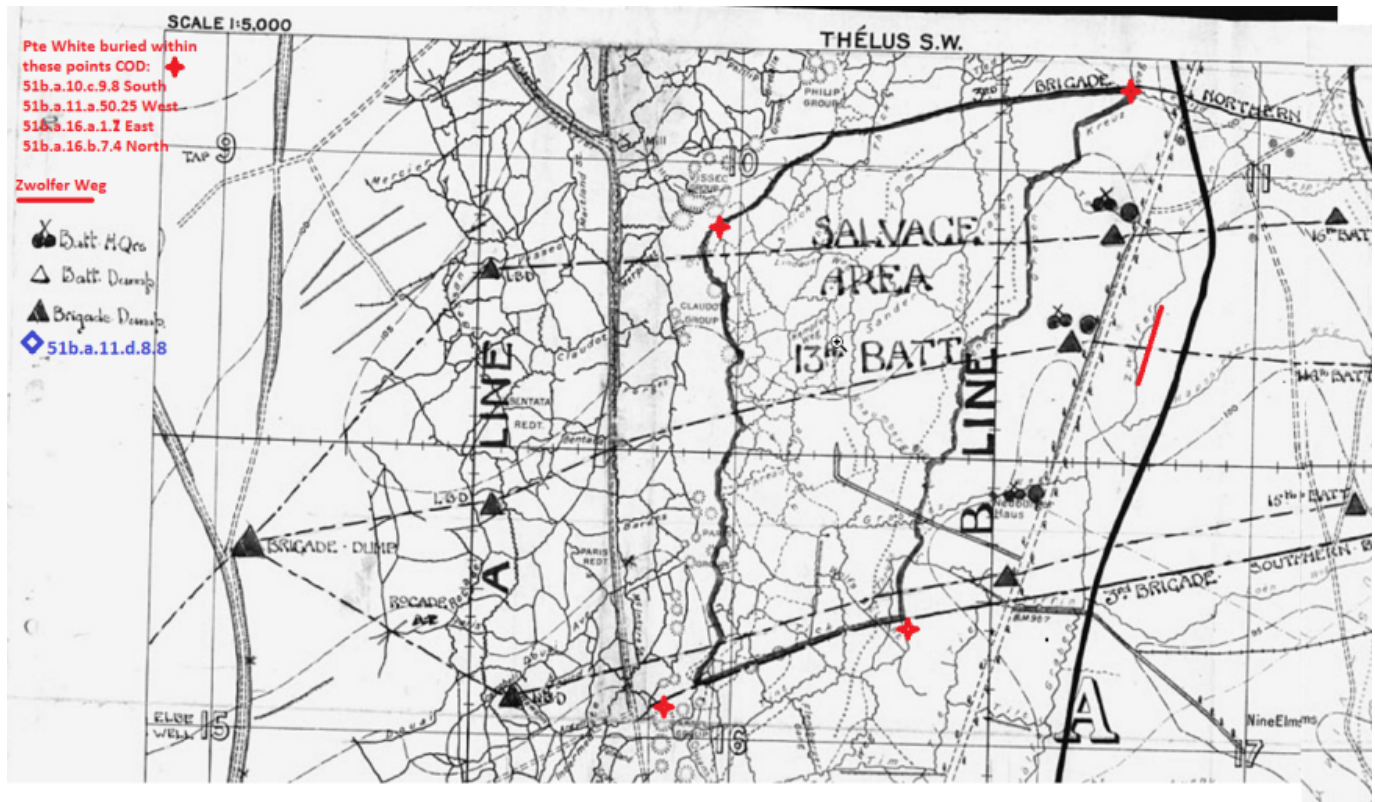
by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sun Jan 24, 2016 4:21 pm**

I got started plotting some of these points on the Salvage Area map of the 13th Battalion, but first needed to splice in a bit of what was missing in the d zone of where we are looking (51b.a.11.d.8.8).

I had to stop immediately and post this when I noticed it appears the men may be buried in an unnamed German trench, immediately west of, and parallel to what was to become known as James Trench (formerly Augsburg Weg).





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jan 27, 2016 8:53 pm**

I had a look at Ted's map of the salvage area and would like to put forward a theory.

By the lines on the map, it appears that there is a flow of goods from the Brigade Dump in Sector 15b through various dumps up towards the "C" Line. This makes sense as the brigade worked feverishly to rehabilitate the ground to make it passable for guns, trams, ammunition, wagons, etc to support the front line. They would have taken supplies from the dumps and moved them forward, establishing forward dumps as indicated on the map.

On the attached image, I have put the forward dumps of the 14/15/16th battalions (green markers) and there is a correlation to the dumps and burial sites (yellow markers), especially Nine Elms. If you look at the markers 14th Dump (2) and 15th Dump (2) they have burial sites close by. However, if you look at the 16th Dump (2) marker, there is no burial site. The pink marker is where Richard and Ted had suggested the real burial site is located (51b.a.11.d.8.8 ).

I would suggest that the flow of supplies and bodies went west to east during the salvage effort and that they would have taken the 44 bodies forward towards 16th Dump (2). As always, any critique is appreciated.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jan 28, 2016 6:06 am**

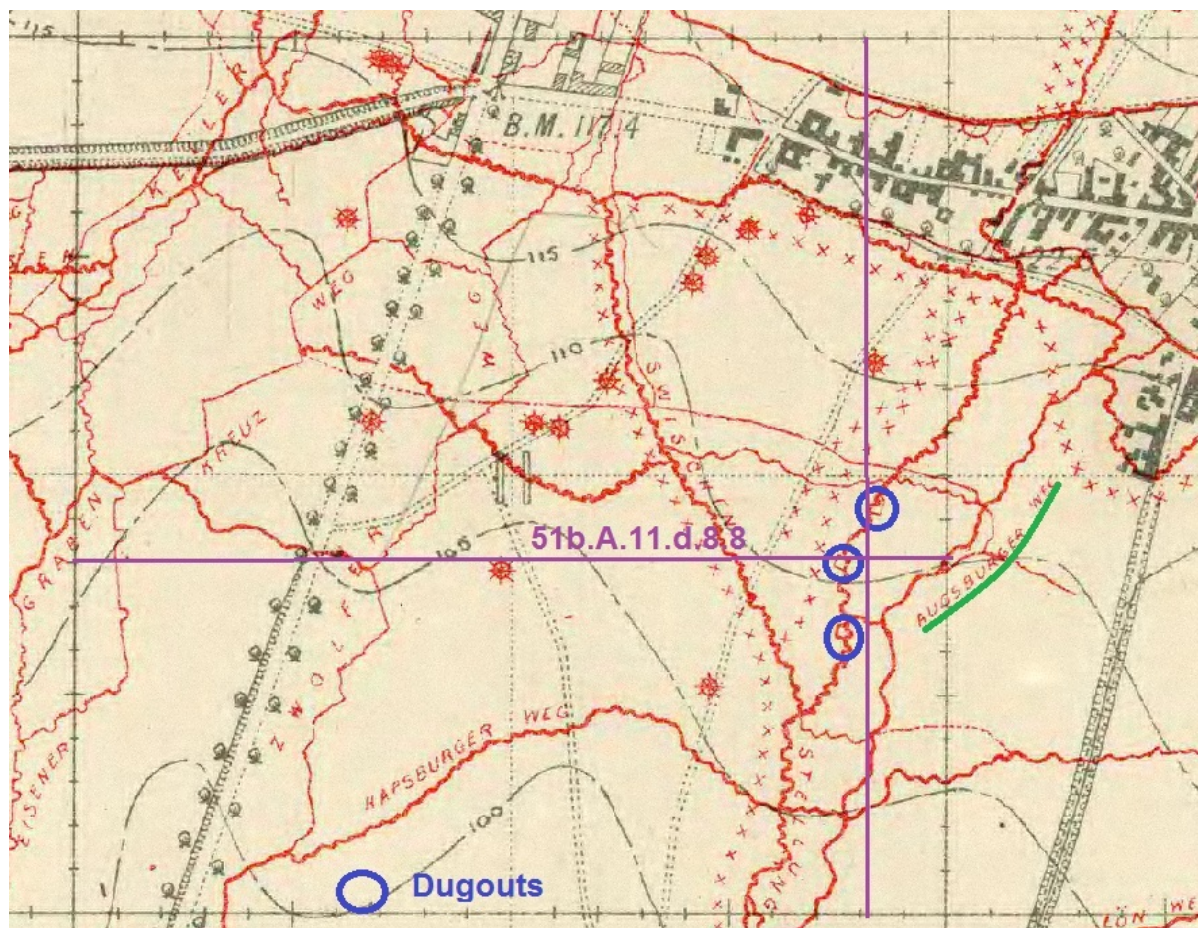
1. Response to Ted.
2. Response to Brad.

**ejwalshe wrote:**

I had to stop immediately and post this when I noticed it appears the men may be buried in an unnamed German trench, immediately west of, and parallel to what was to become known as James Trench (formerly Augsburgers Weg).

I think I follow you on this ..... ?

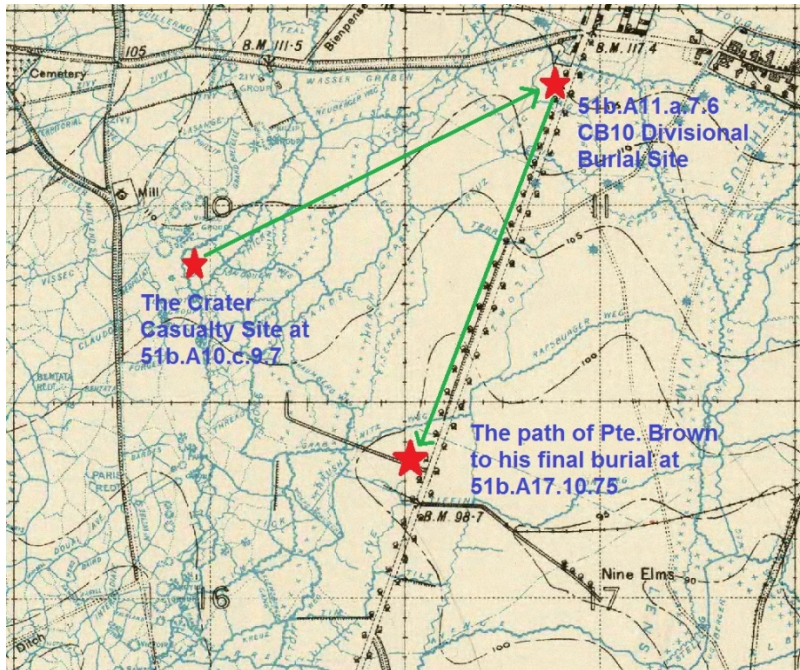
Did you notice that there is a series of **three (3) dugouts** in the immediate vicinity?

**vimyboy wrote:**

I would suggest that the flow of supplies and bodies went west to east during the salvage effort and that they would have taken the 44 bodies forward towards 16th Dump (2). As always, any critique is appreciated.

Quite logical and if you look back at the case of Private Brown, that is exactly what happened. He is our primary evidence in support of the bodies moving from the **A.10.c.9.7** battlefield site (*which we now know is not a crater*) to the **A.11.a.7.6** burial site at CB10 and then down to the Nine Elms Cemetery at **A.17.10.75**.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jan 28, 2016 11:22 pm**

I was able to locate an aerial photograph of 51b A 11 dated October 8, 1917 that clearly shows the railway that Ted identified earlier. I did an overlay in Google Earth and lined up the trenches. The pink marker is the suggested burial location of 51b.11.d.8.8 and it sits right on a light railway track. I have attached the original image downloaded from the Imperial War Museum website and would suggest others try to fit it on GE.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205374754>

I certainly believe that the burial site would be near the railroad but I am skeptical about the 274 meter statement in terms of accuracy. There are many variables to treat it as an absolute measurement. I wish we had the original photograph so we could zoom in without the distortion of a digital photograph.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jan 29, 2016 7:23 am**

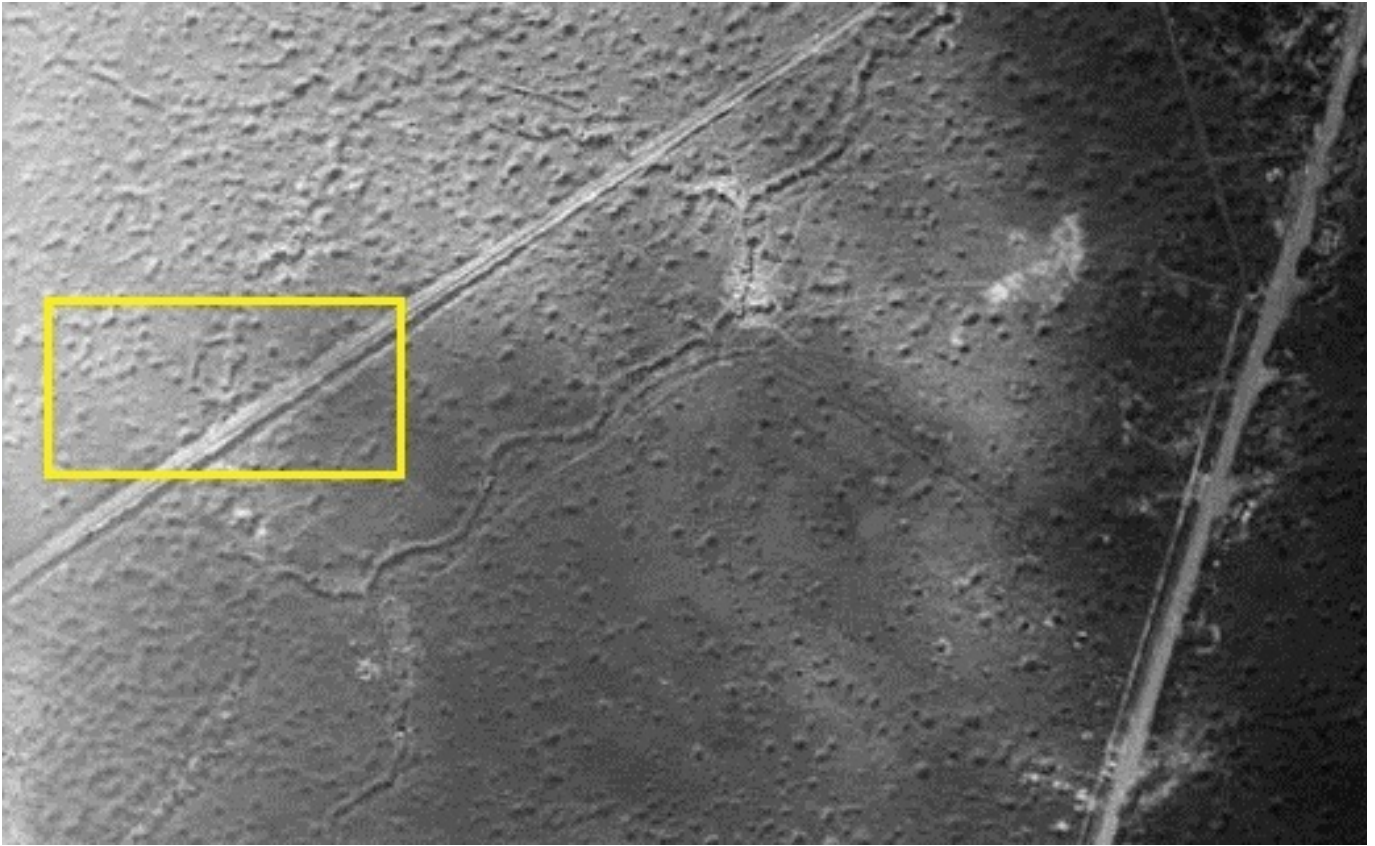
That was not easy to line up, but once I got the correct trench map behind it I think I have it very close. In this first image I put a yellow square around where it lines up with **51b.A.11.d.8.8** and it would appear that there is the edge of a large shell hole or a small crater in that area. Some form of circle, whatever it is. Looks like a picture of the moon! Maybe that is what happened to the moon?

I agree with the 274m issue as it was someone saying "*about 6 grid marks west*", which equates to 300yd so the same as 274m.

Here is a KMZ file of just these pieces:



## KMZ Download



This is my overlay version, I use Google Earth Pro, don't know if they are really any different anymore?



by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Fri Jan 29, 2016 11:47 am**

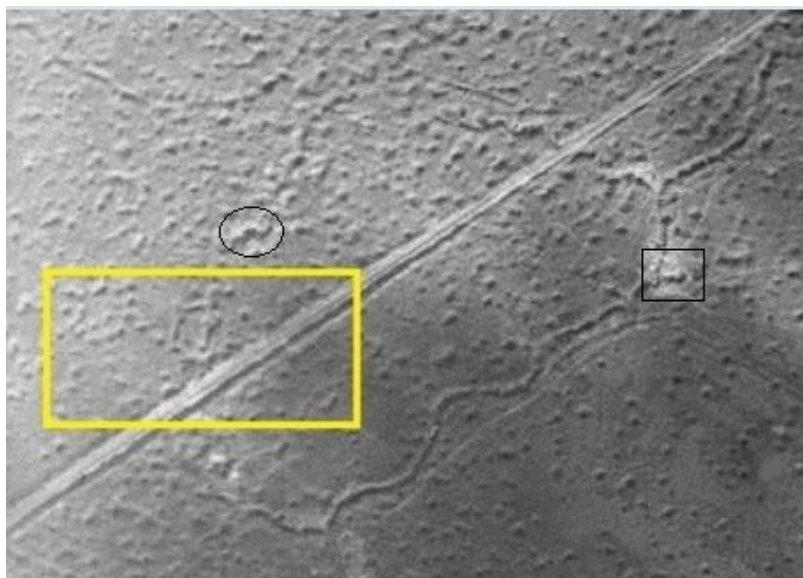
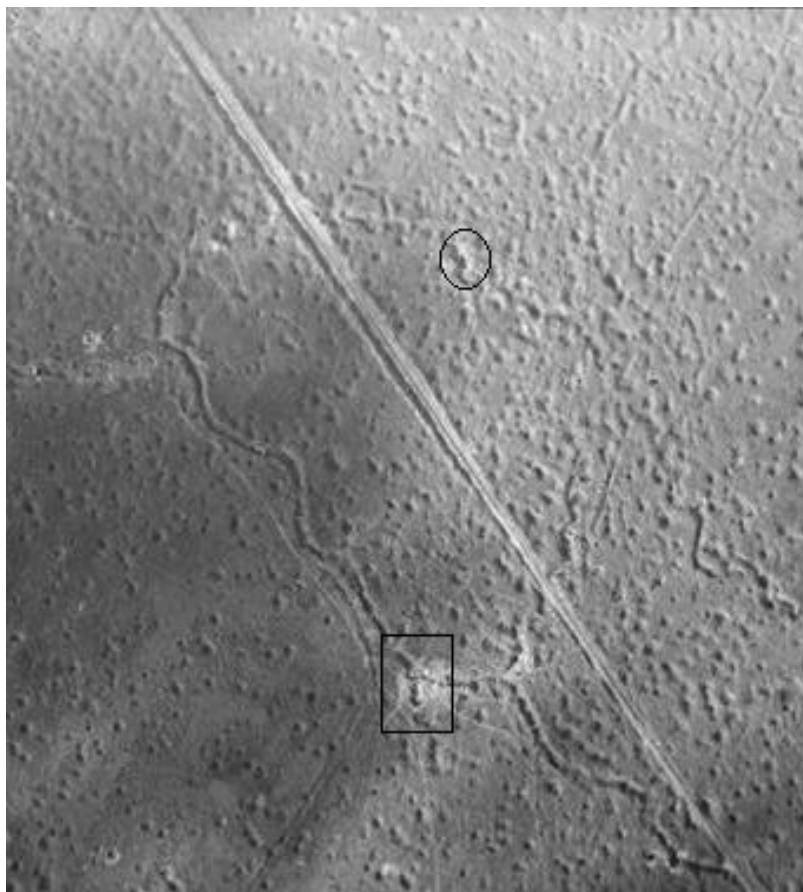
It appears to be a "box" or "U" in an old trench that snakes up to the edge of the rail line, although probably the rail line was simply built over it? A disused trench, probably partially fallen/washed in, would make an ideal "trench grave". The only problem with this one is that it does not look much more filled in than the other sections of the same trench.

Going back to the question of where a logical place was to bury men, the obvious answer would be as close to the line as possible, and no farther back than necessary to reduce travel time and therefore

use of the line as well. And if they were looking that far ahead, a good place for the purposes of later exhumation as well, since the bodies must then be moved by hand, rail or road to their final resting place.

If the cutting was deep at that point it doesn't seem a likely place to unload bodies on stretchers and I see no sign of anything that looks like a grave in those photos.

There is one object that appears to protrude above ground (circled) in the same manner as structure in the square, but it could be just a dugout entrance? It's more clear on the originals above BTW. A grave marker? But does anyone see a space where 40 bodies might lie? I don't.





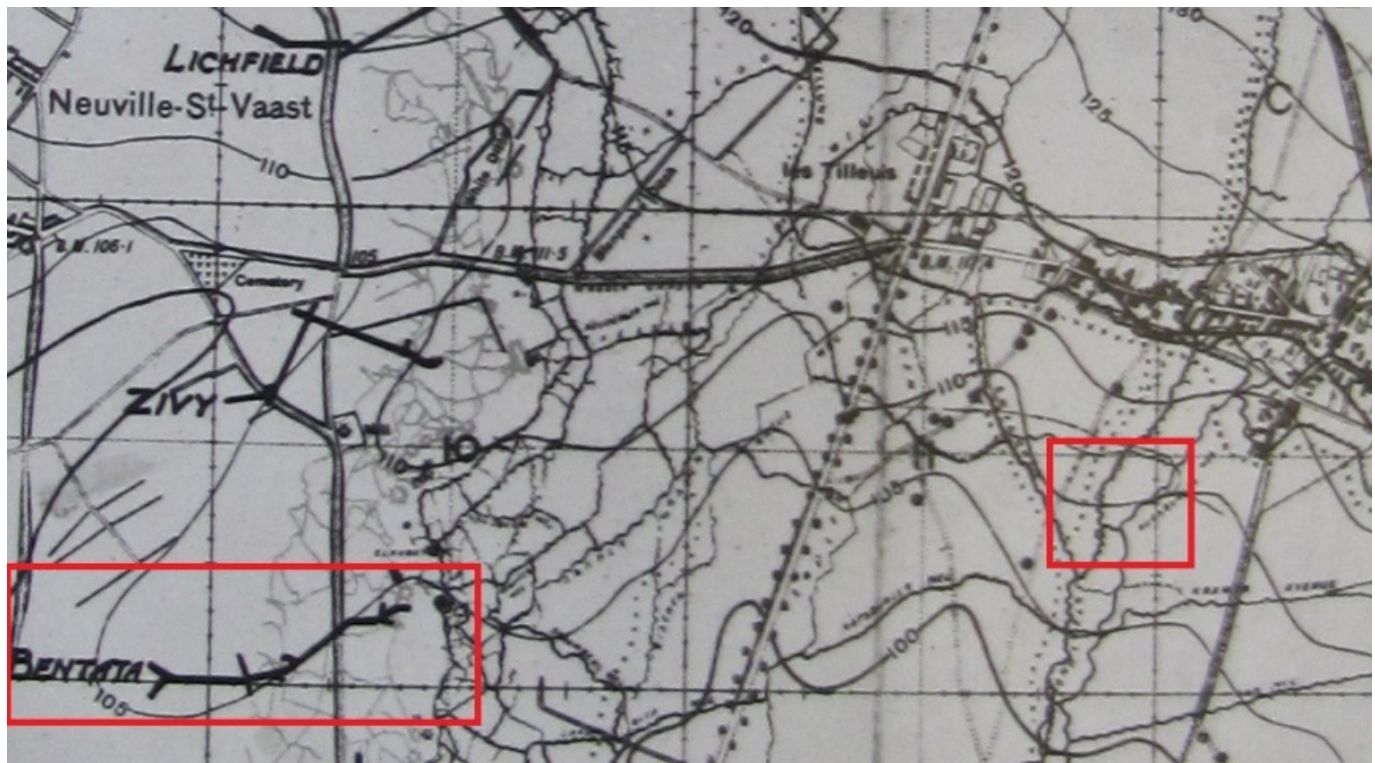
## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jan 31, 2016 10:54 am**

At this point I don't think we know when the rail line was installed but we have presumed that it was shortly after April 9, 1917 as they needed it to move supplies to the front lines. Any reference the CWGC makes to the rail line could be based on what they saw in 1921 or whenever they were recording those graves. It makes sense that they moved the remains to the front on the rail system but we have no proof.

On another project, we have been working with a school group that is mapping the Vimy Front and Floyd Low of the COBWFA has been doing a lot of work on that topic, on his own and to assist the school group. As part of that research he recently sent me a trench map image made by the British 1st Army Group that shows the details of the Canadian Bentata Subway as well as additional trench details of the A.11.d sector. I suspect that this is just prior to April 9, 1917 so we would not expect to see the rail lines on this image.



You might like to see Floyd's end result: [http://www.mediafire.com/download/4el0q ... 2016OP.pdf](http://www.mediafire.com/download/4el0q...2016OP.pdf)

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Feb 01, 2016 7:09 am**

I do not yet know the true significance of this information but I have a suspicion that it may turn out to be very important to this case.

It has to do with DEFENDED LOCALITIES and since I did not know exactly what that meant I went off on a search. The best description appears on Nicholson page 108, which I have clipped from out 2007 transcription of his works (in the Matrix Utilities):

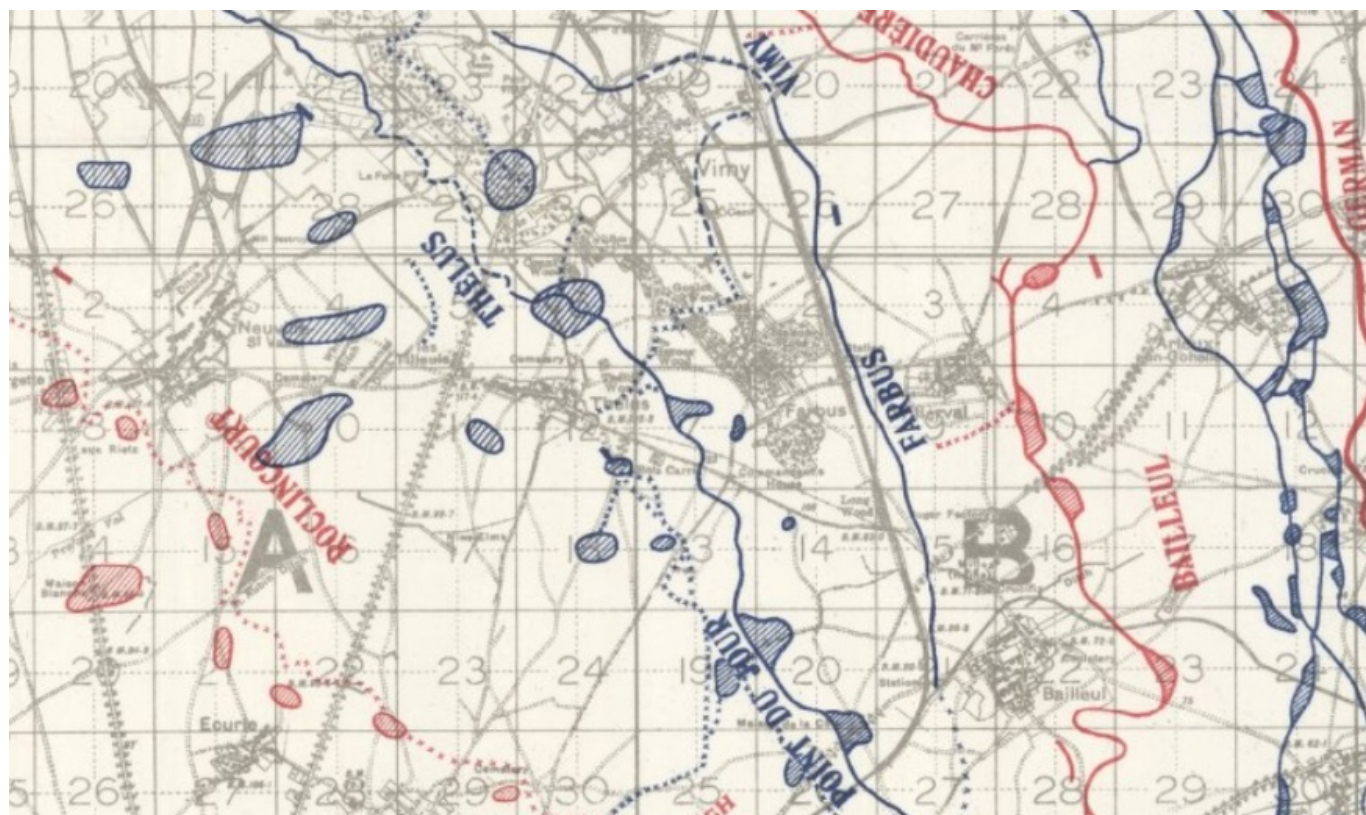
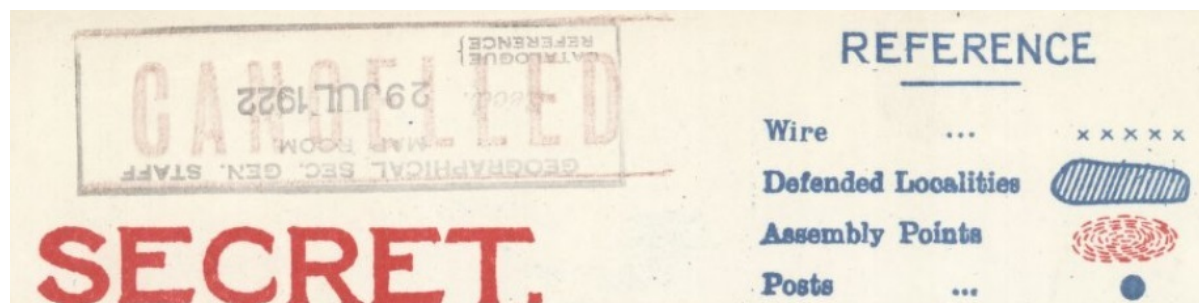
**Nicholson wrote:**

There was much entrenching to be done. At the direction of the C.-in-C. the Corps Commander ordered the construction of a strong defensive zone immediately behind the front line. As we have seen, while British strength in France had been growing during the

first half of 1915, German forces were being transferred to the Eastern Front, so that it no longer seemed probable that the enemy would attack in sufficient numbers to compel a major withdrawal. Accordingly work on such rearward positions as the G.H.Q. line was discontinued. The Corps Commander declared adequate support trenches about seventy yards behind a well maintained front line “to be a matter of the very first necessity”, and the early stages of the programme saw 2000 men employed nightly from the 1st Canadian Division. Depth was given to the two forward lines by the construction of a series of mutually supporting **defended localities** in farm buildings or sandbagged redoubts, each well-wired and sited for all-round defence by a garrison of about platoon strength. In these were mounted eight guns of the 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade (the new designation of the former Automobile Machine Gun Brigade No. 1), which had arrived from England on 21 June. Covering these strongpoints was a subsidiary line of trenches and breastworks about a mile behind the front trenches.

What I came across while searching the trench maps for a completely different reason was two 1st Army Maps that had these **defended localities** marked for the Vimy Sector.

Do you see anything significant in 51b.A.11.5 - a defended locality. A place where the Canadian troops would have been massed to protect the area. Perhaps the rail head for the ammunition going forward?







To make sure I do not lose them, these are the map reference pages:

Army map 'B' : [La Bassée, Givenchy, Vimy]

Series Number Id: UNKNOWN. Sheet number: [36 SW]. First Army secret defence map. At head of map in red overprint: Secret. "[First] Field Survey Co., R.E. 5741 [numbers crossed out and replaced with blue overprint] 5865." Grey squared base map. German front in red; British front and rear defence lines in red and blue. Includes "Reference" to wire, defended localities [hatched areas], assembly points, and posts. Location: Research Collections; Fonds: WW1 Trench Maps: France; Box number: PC23; envelope\_number: 703.

Army map 'B' : [La Bassée, Givenchy, Vimy]

Series Number Id: UNKNOWN. Sheet number: [36 SW]. First Army secret defence map. At head of map in red overprint: Secret. "Showing zones of defence: forward zone [red]; battle zone [blue]; rear zone [green]". "[First] Field Survey Co., R.E. 5741 [numbers crossed out and replace with blue overprint] 5865." Grey squared base map. German front line in red. British front and rear defence lines in red and blue; zones of defence in pink, bale blue and pale green. Includes "Reference" to wire; defended localities (hatched areas); assembly points; posts. Location: Research Collections; Fonds: WW1 Trench Maps: France; Box number: PC23; envelope\_number: 702.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Feb 02, 2016 12:47 pm**

Revisiting the "274 meter" references (there was also same distance cited for Grave CB 10).

There was also a reference to Grave CA 35 - 914 meters West of Nine Elms Cemetery.

Not a coincidence that 274 meters is 300 yards, because 914 meters is 1000 yards.

Obviously, the measurement system back then was standard, and the metric equivalents have been shown on the website today (the Brit's first started using the metric system in the mid 1960's).

We should convert metric measures to their standard equivalents to stay in context.



Use metric only when citing French sources, as they were familiar with metric measures in the Great War.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Feb 03, 2016 3:36 am**

I was reviewing the aerial photo that I posted on January 28th and think I may have identified an area that could be the burial place for the 44 members of the 16th Battalion. I compared this photo, taken in August, 1917, with a new photo I found that was taken on April 5th, 1917.

In the August photo, you can see a trench that seems to be filled in and terminates before it reaches the connecting trench. On trench maps and on the April photo, this trench is connected. Is it possible that the bodies were buried in this trench and it covered? The covered trench is about 100 feet long and is about 270 yards from the road.

On the second image below, you can see that the trench was connected on April 5th. You may have to download the image and review it for better clarity. I have attached a link below. I wish I had a better aerial photograph of the area before the attack to conclusively verify the trench was open and connected.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205374699>

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Feb 03, 2016 8:45 am**

Although I think I am losing my eyesight - I would agree that area is a prime one for investigation. However, I think it could also be the location to the left.

My apologies to those that tried to use the previous KMZ file as I think I forgot to save the overlay after I had it organized, as when I opened it again the aerial photograph was in the original form. 😞

I have repeated that and reloaded it here: (this time I will test it!)

Brad's Aerial on Google Earth KMZ

I repeated this process as I think the overlay is now better placed and the d.8.8 area is closer than where it is shown above, which gives some strength to the proposition being put forth. In the image below I have also marked another area to the left and a wee bit higher (NW) where it appears to me the same thing may have happened.

What it comes down to in the end is that this is the general area we believe needs to be investigated by GPR or EMR, if the soil conditions are adequate. We might also find a garbage dump from the defended locality or strong point, or the 600 horses they lost! The crater strikes me as the more logical place for the horses.

On the following, if this is correctly aligned:

- ORANGE - where I understand Brad is directing us in the post above
- YELLOW - an alternate area where it appears the same may have occurred
- PINK - the largest extend of the preliminary investigation



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Feb 03, 2016 9:09 am**

Incredible photo vimyboy!

A filled in trench right next to the light rail line? (The yellow area in Richard's photo above).

It can't get any better than this.

This corroborates what we have been suspecting.

Push me over the 95% confidence level now!

---

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All times are UTC-04:00  
Page **8** of **30**



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 9 of 30

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Wed Feb 03, 2016 6:58 pm**

As you rightly pointed out Richard, the railway line being used for the removal of the dead is an assumption on our part. If the bodies were coming back by rail to near that point, why not bury them in the trenches immediately adjacent to the rail line?

This filled in trench, if that is what it is, would be highly interesting and I notice what looks like a footpath leading down to the "filled in" area, where it seems to end! There seem to be quite a few of these paths over the battlefield and this individual photo. Would they be the tracks of salvage and burial parties? The only question in my mind would be why bury men there and not farther up the trench along which the path seems to run? Or am I mistakenly assuming that the bulk of the dead were brought back from that direction? I see no sign of a foot path from the railway line to that "filled in" trench.

There do appear to be three, maybe four shell holes or else mounds, within that filled in area. Again, two prints under a stereo viewer for that 3D effect would tell so much more!

(Click on photo for full size)

Following that foot path up along the trench to the light area around a blockhouse(?) or dugout(?) one sees that two (or one could say four) paths seem to converge on it. Coincidence, or could it have been a control or collection point for salvage or burial parties?

I recall reading about a corduroy(?) road at Vimy with dead horses lining both sides for hundreds of yards. Unless the corpses of the horses were too deteriorated, I would expect them to be have been salvaged for rendering. If they were too deteriorated to move for that purpose they were probably too far gone to move for burial as well. A 1000 pounds of dead horse is not easily moved; it takes a team of horses or a larger team of men.

Is there anything other than bodies that was being buried on the battlefield at that point in the clearing and salvage operations?

Do we know what formation was clearing the battlefield and when?

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Feb 20, 2016 1:05 pm**

I found a site that give a more current view of the Thelus area. Google Earth's imagery is 10 years old.

[https://maps.here.com/?map=50.35065,2.7 ... llite&x=ep](https://maps.here.com/?map=50.35065,2.7...llite&x=ep)

You can see by the attached screen shot that the light railway Ted discovered is clearly seen.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Feb 25, 2016 6:11 pm**

### Report to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

#### March 1, 2016: The Location of CA40 Burial Site, Thelus, France

For more than a year, a Research Team at the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group has been undertaking an examination of available records to identify the most probable location of the First World War burial site known as CA 40 ("*C*" for "*Canadian*", "*A*" for "*1st Division*" and "*40*" the "*numerical identifier*"). This is our report on those findings.

The CWGC reference to the burial ground is contained in the documentation for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus:

**CWGC wrote:**

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

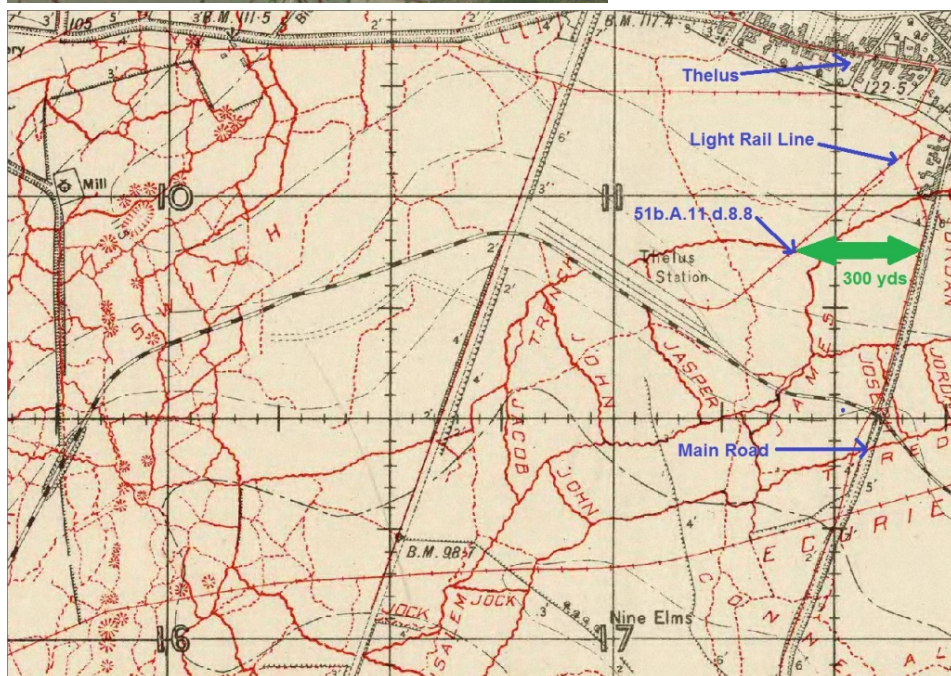
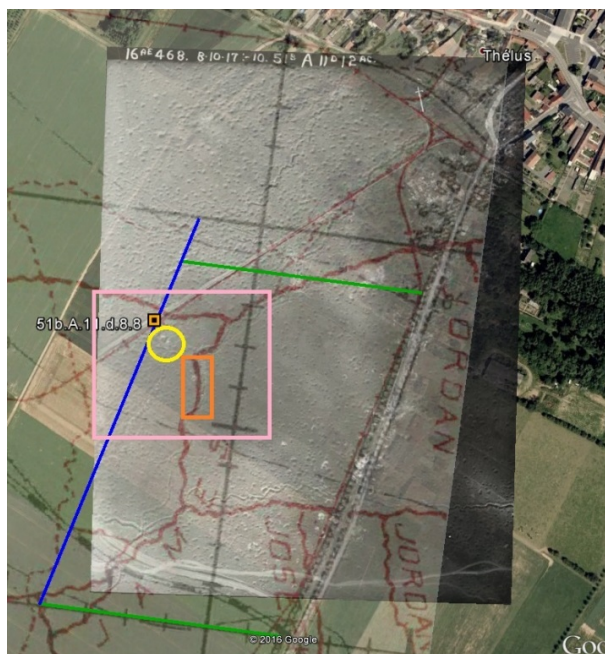
Our investigation agrees completely with this description, which we understand was initially provided by the British First Army to the Imperial War Graves Commission during the period in which graves were being concentrated in May of 1919.

The tools we used to undertake our research into the true location of the CA 40 burial sited consisted of:

1. *Circumstances of Death* and *E-13 War Graves Registers* for Canadian soldiers buried in CA 40 and other temporary burial sites in the Thelus area.
2. *Graves Registration Report Forms* (GRRF) and *Concentration of Graves Exhumations and Re-Burials Burial Returns* (COG-BR) for the concentration cemeteries in the area where Canadian remains were buried.
3. War Diaries of the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Vimy in April 1917 at the Division, Brigade and Battalion level.
4. 1:40,000 scale area trench maps from the Lloyd Reeds Collection at McMaster University, Hamilton Canada.
5. 1:10,000 scale trench maps from the Imperial War Museum contained in the DVD set "The National Archives British Trench Map Atlas DVD 1".
6. On-line aerial photographs from the area south of Thelus as available for Sector A of Trench Map 51b.
7. Photographs of burial sites in the Vimy sector in the Spring of 1917, from the collection at Library and Archives Canada.
8. Google Earth overlays of the area using a combination of 1917 trench maps and aerial photographs to identify the key features of the area.
9. Photographs of battalion burial sites in the Vimy sector in Spring of 1917, from the collection of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project.
0. Information on the location of subways, tunnels and craters in the Thelus sector in Spring of 1917, provided by the DURAND GROUP.
1. On-site inspection of the area by the Project Director of the CEFSG Research Team undertaking this investigation.

On the basis of the work undertaken to date, we are able to clearly identify a site where the CWGC defines the location as 274 metres (300 yards) west of the main road by the light railway track. Using

the Google Earth overlay process, the team was able to accurately identify the location at 51b.A.11.d.8.8 (GPS Coordinates 50.3513, 2.7958 or 50°21'4.68"N 2°47'44.88"E). The area is shown in the attached image as a partially filled in trench at the junction of the light rail line and the 274-metre mark from the road:



The CEFSG Project Director will return to the site in April 2016 and confirm the location of the site and discuss options to gain access to the site for examination of the surface geotechnical conditions. We anticipate the most appropriate next step is a surface level examination of the sub-surface geotechnical characteristics using non-intrusive instruments such as GPR (*Ground Penetrating Radar*) and/or EM Survey (*Electromagnetic*). Prior to deciding on the best approach, it is essential to discuss the local soil conditions in the area with geotechnical experts in France who are intimately familiar with the area. The historic displacement of the soil from the war and the local chalk strata may have a significant impact on the study conditions.

We can provide additional details on our investigation to date, and would be pleased to meet with CWGC representatives at the site during the Project Director's visit in April 2016.



**Project Reporting Team:**

- Project Director: Edward J. Walshe, Jr. Eng. - Pointe-Claire, Quebec
- Richard V. Laughton, B.Sc., M.Eng, C.Chem., QEPe - Milton, Ontario
- Bradley Armstrong, B.Com., C.A.- Vancouver, British Columbia

**Project Reviewers, Researchers & Contributors:**

- Brigadier-General (Ret'd) Greg Young, OMM, MSM, CD - Mississauga, Ontario
- Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd) Roman Jarymowycz, OMM, CD, Ph.D. - Beaconsfield, Quebec
- Marika I. Pirie, B.A., B.Ed, M.A. - Calgary, Alberta
- Corinne MacLellan, B.A. - Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Ian Ogilvie, CSO-OFA2 - Vancouver, British Columbia

**EDIT: Submitted to the CWGC - Maidenhead on March 1, 2016**

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **fatford41**

Posted: **Thu Feb 25, 2016 6:54 pm**

Very impressive. Here's hoping that it results in a positive response.

Cheers  
Bob

---

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Feb 29, 2016 7:25 pm**

Report has been submitted to CWGC Maidenhead.

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **Waggoner**

Posted: **Mon Feb 29, 2016 7:57 pm**

Amazing, simply amazing work! The amount of detail that goes into these projects is astounding. Sorry for all the superlatives but I am very, very impressed. Hopefully, the CWGC will be similarly responsive!

All the best,

Gary

---

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **fatford41**

Posted: **Wed Mar 02, 2016 5:12 pm**

Posted minutes ago on FB

NORM CHRISTIE

Posted a Facebook update on Help Recover Our Vimy Heros

Story update 35 minutes ago

Help Recover THESE Vimy Heroes. Of the 44 men who died during the Battle of Vimy on April 9, 1917 who are believed still buried on the battlefield in crater CA40, three of the men (at least) were unidentified, while 41 men, all members of the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, were identified, including Pte. William J. Milne (pictured here) who was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously for "most conspicuous bravery and

devotion to duty". Here are the names of the 41 identified men:

420819 Pte. Herbert W. Allan CA40. Age 24. Winnipeg  
 736569 Pte. Lancelot M. Attwood CA40. Age 30. Lethbridge, Alberta  
 625286 Pte. John A. Armitage CA40. Age 34. Manville, Alberta  
 700410 Pte. Edwin V. Ball CA40. Age 36. Winnipeg  
 736746 Pte. Ernest E. Betts CA40. Age 28. Raymond, Alberta  
 736108 L.Cpl. George F. Blaik CA40. Age 37. Calgary  
 718192 Pte. Fred Baguley CA40. Age 25. Alameda, Sask.  
 871504 Pte. Louis Boniver CA40. Liege, Belgium  
 43945 Pte. Robert E. Bradshaw CA40. Age 29. Toronto  
 721564 Pte. Walter Clemons CA40. Age 23. Pine Falls, Manitoba  
 160168 Pte. William F. Dickson CA40. Age 26. Calgary  
 736317 Pte. Cyril A. Gooding CA40. Age 19. Cardston, Alberta  
 722078 Pte. Richard A. Glassford CA40. Age 21. Pelley? Sask  
 624801 Pte. John H.P. Gibbons CA40. Age 20. Innisfree, Alberta  
 A/2040 Sgt. William Hamilton CA40. Age 31. Scotland  
 736703 Pte. Arthur J. Hawkins CA40. Age 33. Leeds, UK  
 105644 Pte. William. A. Henderson CA40. Age 31. Marlbank, Ontario  
 628188 L.Cpl. James Howie CA40. Age 36. Vancouver  
 736880 Pte. Walter H. Hooper CA40. Age 25. Clareholm, Alberta  
 624957 Pte. Hupert L. Kilcup CA40. Age 29. Sackville, New Brunswick  
 718249 Pte. Alfred J. Kirby CA40. Age 28. St. Norbert, Manitoba  
 426344 Pte. Archibald L. Latimer CA40. Regina  
 700022 L.Cpl. William W. Laycock CA40. Age 36. Winnipeg  
 736651 Pte. Sanford W. Leitch CA40. Age 23. Creelman, Sask.  
 718699 Pte. Francis J. Manning CA40. Age 30. Plumas, Manitoba  
 427586 Pte. William J. Milne, VC. CA40. Age 25. Enlisted Moose Jaw, Sask.  
 718526 Pte. Henry McWilliams CA40. Age 39. Winnipeg  
 736171 Pte. Thomas McCandless CA40. Age 32. Cabri, Sask.  
 420765 Pte. Duncan McCowan CA40. Age 31. Winnipeg  
 859684 Pte. Robert Owen CA40. Age 29. Belmont, Manitoba  
 718269 Pte. Robert Pattison CA40. Age 23. Glasgow, Scotland  
 736967 Pte. George B. Piper CA40. Age 21. Nebraska  
 105741 Pte. Frank V. Phillips CA40. Age 21. Regina  
 624593 Pte. Alfred H. Parsons CA40. Age 19. Georgetown, Ontario  
 737084 Pte. Levi G. Powell CA40. Age 43. Surrey, UK  
 129200 Pte. Arthur F. Ruddock CA40. Age 19, Powell River, BC  
 77309 Sgt. Irwin H. Simmons CA40. Age 37. Creston, BC  
 624477 Pte. Thomas A. Snelgrove CA40. Age 23. UK  
 625305 Pte. Joseph Strickler CA40. Age 19. Boyne Lake, Alberta  
 129336 Pte. Robert H. Tarlton CA40. Age 36. Mission City, BC  
 719161 Pte. Joseph Willerton CA40. Age 23. Riding Mountain, Manitoba

Here's the campaign that needs your help...

Help Recover Our Vimy Heroes

by Norm Christie

\$30,570 raised 226 contributors 35 weeks running

44 members of the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, who died playing a heroic part in the April 1917 Battle of Vimy Ridge may still be buried in a temporary grave in mine crater CA40. These heroes deserve a proper burial.

Follow it Check it out Help Norm Christie now

Cheers  
Bob

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 11:00 am**

### Burial Grounds at Vimy near LIGHT RAIL!

(the light rail line is clearly visible on the left in each photo - too bad can't read marker!)



MIKAN 3403355 [ Full size ]

Canadian graves near Vimy. September, 1917. Sep., 1917. [151 KB, 1000 X 787]





MIKAN 3403362 [ Full size ]

Canadian Cemetery near Vimy Station. December, 1917. Dec., 1917. [147 KB, 1000 X 788]

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 12:16 pm**

What is the edifice in the background in the second photo? What does the obvious gradient suggest about the location? Is "Vimy Station" a light rail station or standard gauge? I suppose we should consider the possibility of one or both photos be accidentally reversed.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 12:34 pm**

Richard;

Great find. It really gives evidence that it was common practice to bury the men near railway lines. The photo from September 1917 could be our candidate. If we assume the cemetery is on the east side of the line and the view is to the North-East it would be consistent with territory as being relatively flat with a slight rise to Thelus. In the background, you can see telephone poles running parallel to what would be the "main road," converging to meet the railway in Thelus. Also, the end of the railway track seems to split or turn , just as it does when it passes Thelus.

If this photo is correct, and I am still not convinced yet that it is, we may have reconsider where we have put our location. This cemetery is closer to the tracks than I originally thought and therefore the proposed position in an abandoned trench may not be realistic. Secondly, the cemetery may be closer to Thelus than originally thought.

I hope that we can find an aerial photograph of that time - the cemetery would certainly be visible. But then again, how can you lose such a beautiful cemetery?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **jayelbee**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 12:39 pm**

William Wilkinson Laycock, 700022, was one of the very first to enlist with the 101st Winnipeg Light Infantry Battalion. Unfortunately, he missed photo day, so I don't have a photo of him. His CEF file has not yet been digitized. L/Cpl Laycock's Circumstances of Death card locates his grave at 51b.A.10.c.9.7; while his Graves Registration card gives the location as at CA40, 36c.A.10.c.9.7. Both cards bear the comment that the grave is located 1/2 mile southeast of Neuville St Vaast and 3 3/4 miles north of Arras

Edwin Vere Ball, 700410 was not so shy. Pte Ball was with 5th Platoon of B Company, 101st Battalion. Here he is



Vere's Circumstances of Death and Graves Registration cards give the same map reference: 36c.A.10.c.9.7, along with the same notations as Laycock's cards

Cheers, Jim

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 1:58 pm**

I suspect these are graves of 1st Canadian Division soldiers, a little south of where we are looking and perhaps along the light rail line I had misidentified a year ago (the one where the burial site is currently under the A26 on ramp).

The reason being almost all photos from Vimy Ridge area currently posted on LAC are 1st Division photos.

However, it is just a matter of time before we begin to see the 2nd Canadian Division photos.

It will be a very exciting moment...in a matter of weeks, rather than months I hope.

It may be a photograph that will confirm everything 🙏

**EDIT: Thanks Richard (see below)...I stand corrected - after consulting Nicholson's Vimy Ridge .kmz**

map, I erred and had the 16th fighting with, instead of alongside the 2nd Cdn Div. But the conclusion is the same - I think one of these photos is south of 51b.A.11.d.8.8, under the A26.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 2:16 pm**

Ted:

The 16th Battalion is 1st Division?

Richard

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **jayelbee**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 3:10 pm**

The 16th (Canadian Scottish) Battalion was the fourth battalion of the Third Infantry Brigade, along with the 13th (Black Watch), 14th (Royal Montreal Regiment) and the 15th (48th Highlanders); all part of the First Canadian Division.

Cheers, Jim

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 3:22 pm**

I passed by the 1st Canadian Division Memorial last year - I had no idea it still exists...

Canadian 1st Division Memorial

This was not easy to find...as Simon suggested, "I would be of the opinion this is a rarely visited memorial..."

GPS: 50.34914, 2.81521



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 10 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 4:28 pm**

**vimyboy wrote:**

An online version of Hugh Urquhart's History of the 16th Battalion can be found on the following link.

<http://contentdm.ucalgary.ca/cdm/ref/collection/16thBattalion/id/30480>

Brad:

I had a miserable time reading that on-line but I figured out the code to get the whole page intact:

Once you have a page showing RIGHT CLICK and then pick INSPECT ELEMENT (Google Chrome)

I changed the parts in **RED** until I could see the page full screen.

The part in **BLUE** is the page number so just change it as needed.

This should now give you Chapter 16 for Vimy Ridge:

[http://www.mediafire.com/download/stuut ... imy%29.pdf](http://www.mediafire.com/download/stuut...imy%29.pdf)

I will see if it works to get the complete text - first I must tend to the Bride!

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 5:05 pm**

Awesome, Brad.

**Page 214 confirms everything for me.**

The bulk of the 16th casualties occurred here - just west of the main road.

Great work - I am floored by how much we have learned in the past two months.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri Mar 04, 2016 10:27 pm**

Are there any documents that list the soldiers by individual company at the time of the attack, or shortly before? I would find it interesting to know what companies the 44 soldiers were posted to.

Captain Gordon Tupper was with the 3rd Company and killed at the craters at the beginning of the attack. He is buried at Ecoivres Cemetery. I believe NC asserts that the men of CA40 were mostly killed at the craters. If that is the case, we should see more soldiers from Company's 3 & 4 who led the

attack at the craters and especially Tupper, unless he got a special burial.

The case of Milne, VC, who was killed later in the day after the attack on the Lens-Arras Road and is among the missing 44, reaffirms our case that the missing soldiers may be part of the fighting on the east side of the battlefield, nearer our current location.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

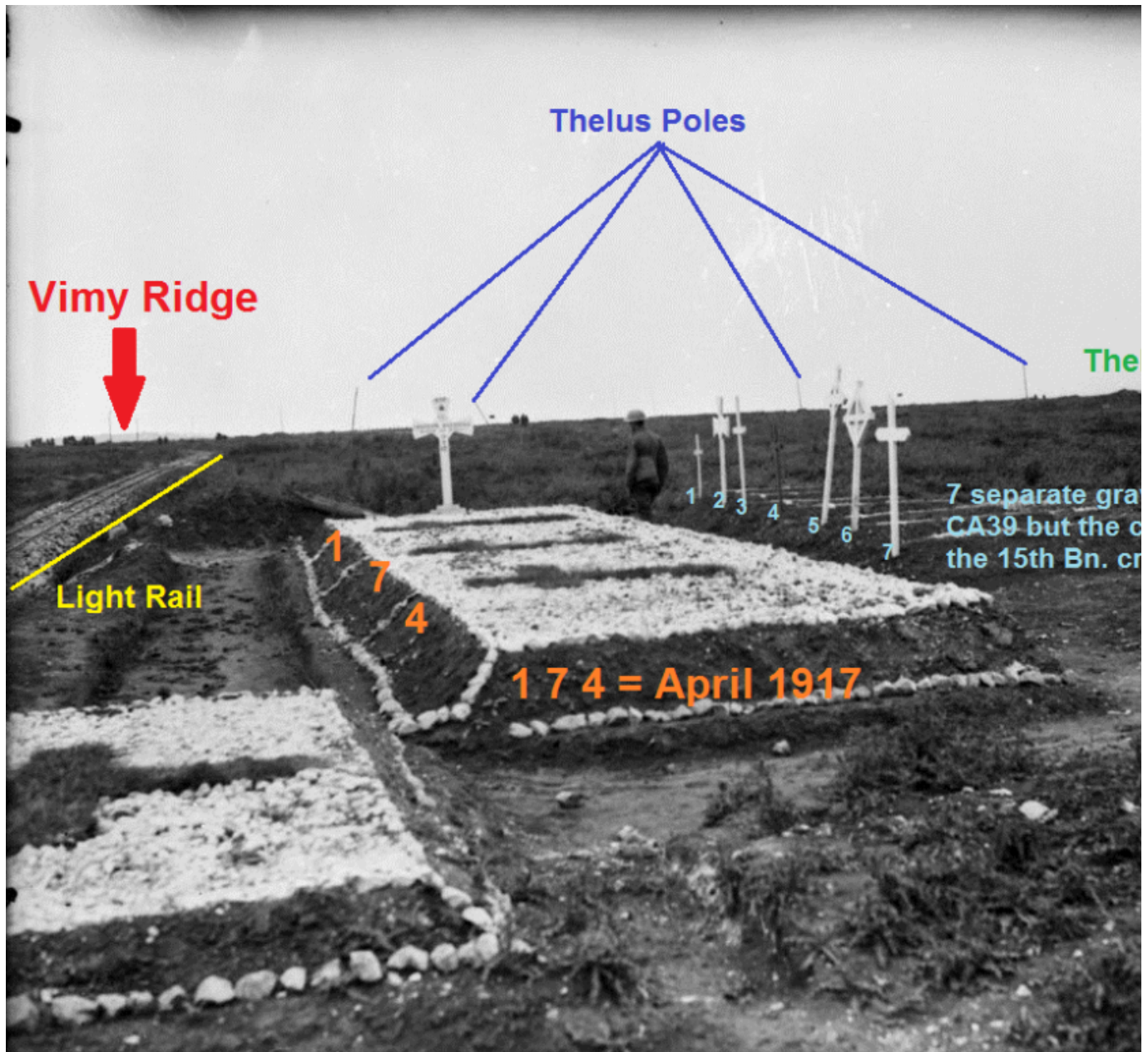
by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Mar 05, 2016 9:55 am**

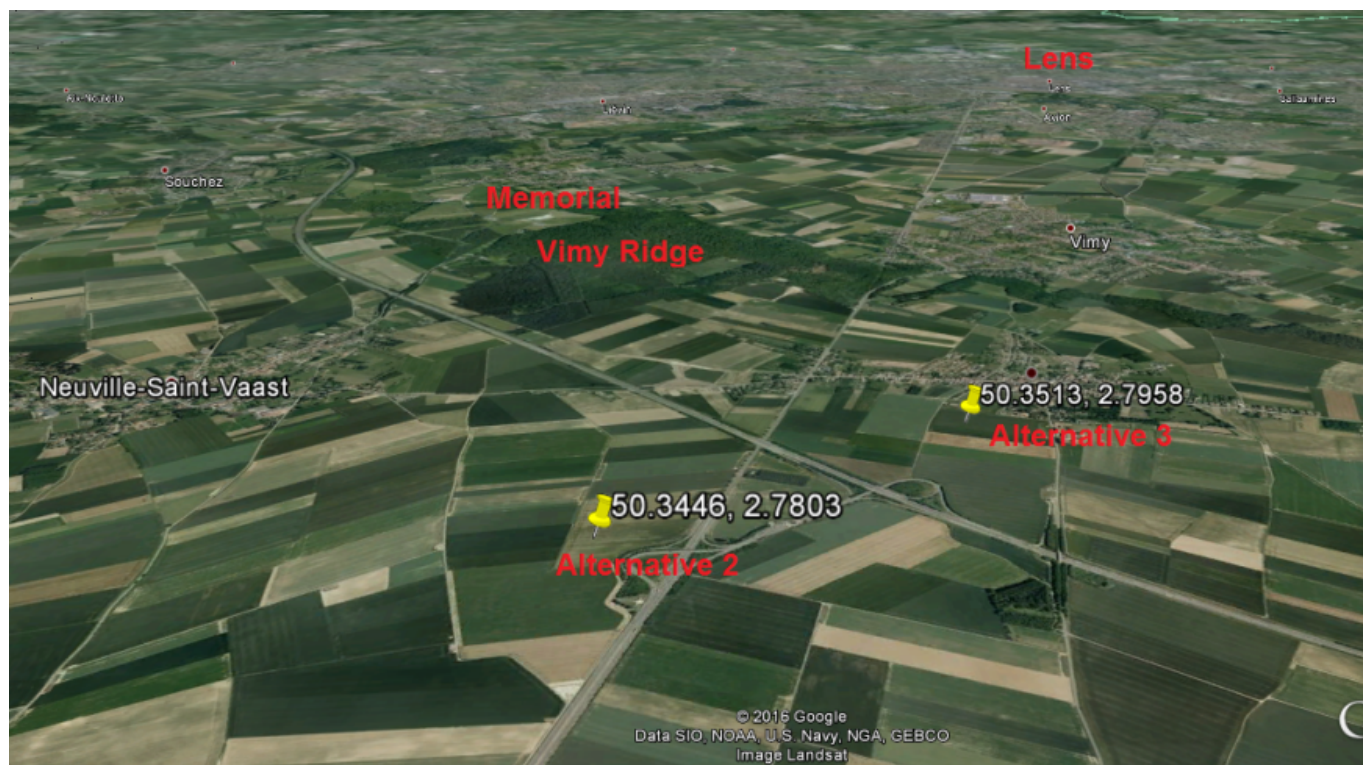
Possible photograph if that is Vimy Ridge to the north west and Thelus to the north east. There appears to be at least two trench (mass) burials here and the seven individual. Can that be matched to a set of coordinates on the COG-BR documents?

It would appear that this could be from Alternative #3 ( **51b.A.11.d.8.8** ) and if I try to match it to Alternative #2 ( **51b.A.16.b.40.25** ) then Vimy Ridge is in the wrong place and Thelus is too far away to see the poles. Grave CA6 is in the area but it only has 6 men total.

This is the link to the unmarked image. It depends on your screen resolution and contrast whether you can see the ridge to the north west (image link).







## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat Mar 05, 2016 10:15 am**

Brad, I have been focusing on Lt John Cowan of 9 Platoon in 3 Company (No.s 9, 10, 11 & 12 Platoons in 3 Co.).

My theory is the majority of the missing men belonged to Lt Cowan's 9 Platoon - Lt Cowan was ordered to take a strong point in the immediate vicinity of 51b.a.11.d.8.8. As we have learned from the 16th Btn text, the men were surprised the German's were offering stiff resistance in the form of machine-gun fire from the main road. I believe Lt Cowan's 9 Platoon fell victim to the machine-guns.

However, I have no evidence yet to support my case linking the missing men to 9 Platoon.

Brad: *"I would find it interesting to know what companies the 44 soldiers were posted to."*

I think it would prove to be much more than just interesting!

Richard, great identification of the Thelus Poles - it makes me think we will find the burial location on the eastern side of the former light rail.

I wonder if a visit to LAC to see this photo would reveal more detail?

How confident am I that Richard's annotated photo is the actual burial site of the missing men of the 16th Battalion?

**10%**

Which way will the meter move? Stay tuned to this post!

**EDIT APRIL 9, 2016: Photos, the existence of the cross today, and Brad's recent comments lead me to believe perhaps the men were once buried here near 51b.A.11.d.8.8, but surely they were moved, very likely to Nine Elms Military Cemetery.**

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Mar 09, 2016 4:41 pm**

Two important points I found today in the bowels of the 3rd Brigade War Diary. I have added these to the report.

### Point #1: Is the NC Proposed CA40 at a Crater?

Answer = **NO**

Proof:

Confirmation that the area reported as one of the burial sites at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** is not in a crater area is provided in the April War Diary of the 3rd Infantry Brigade (page 308 of 331). Although the text is smeared, it appears to be the report of a Patrol sent out on April 6, 1917. A party of 12 men under the direction of a Lance Corporal went through Vissec crater to the German lines. They report that they easily passed through the enemy wire at **51b.A.10.c.7.7**.

An additional report from the Adjutant 16th Battalion reported the left company found enemy wire from **A.10.c.90.45 to A.10.c.85.80**, with several passages cut through. The heaviest bunched wire was at A.10.c.90.45 to A.10.c.85.55. The right company found wire in the same area that had not been touched (*presumably referring to the artillery*) and it will present a considerable obstacle.

**Update:** Additional details that support the information that the area was not in a crater is provided in the war diary of the 14th Infantry Battalion (*Royal Montreal Regiment*), situated on the right flank of the 16th Battalion. The area is specifically referred to the "Old French Trench" which extended from 521b.A.10.c.76.46 to 51b.A.10.77.05, exactly as it is depicted on the 1916 and 1917 trench maps. In essence this was the British Front Line, with the German Front Line running from 51b.A.10.d.0.0 north to 51b.A.10.d.0.5 and then northwest to 51b.A.10.c.9.7.

The importance of this information to the CA40 case is that this area was a wired trench area and not a crater as other researchers have suggested.

### ***Point #2 - Did the 13th Battalion Clear the Battlefield as Planned? Where were the Burial Grounds?***

Answer 2(a) = **NO**

Answer 2(b) = Lille-Arras Road

Proof:

The war diary of the 3rd Infantry Brigade contains an interesting report on operations of April 9th from the 13th Battalion dated April 11, 1917 (page 162 of 331). In the Officer Commanding (O.C.) reports that the 13th Battalion occupied the Eisner Kruz Weg while the attacking battalions were consolidating the Black (1st) Objective. The 13th then moved forward to the Black Line at ZERO+75 to establish a Battalion H.Q. at Zwolfer Weg (east side of the Arras-Lens Road). At that time the Commanding Officer 13th Battalion reported that he did not believe that adequate provisos had been made for evacuating the wounded or burying the dead. The O.C. reported that most of the work was done by the attacking troops. This was of course contrary to what was planned. He went on to report that no one saw the Divisional Burial Officer or any of his men. Nonetheless he reported that the men worked very well at clearing the battlefield of wounded and burying the dead.

On April 10th the Brigade Major issued a further directive (page 187 of 331) calling for the collecting and burying of all British dead forthwith, prior to the Brigade moving further back. **The orders called**

for the construction of two burial grounds, with one on the East of the Lille-Arras Road and one on the West.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Thu Mar 10, 2016 2:14 am**

*ejwalshe wrote:*

.....

Brad: "I would find it interesting to know what companies the 44 soldiers were posted to."  
I think it would prove to be much more than just interesting!

What did you learn from that info I sent Ted? Remember the same company info is available for almost all the 16th men, missing or not, if that would help to figure out what companies or sections/platoons were where in the attack?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Mar 10, 2016 6:35 am**

They were laying the light railway tracks as early as the evening of April 9th.

I found this in the memoirs of 1st Division Chaplain, Canon Scott: (The Great War as I Saw It)

*Canon Frederick George Scott wrote:*

Later on when I was down in a German dugout which had been turned into the headquarters of our advanced artillery brigade, and was eating the half tin of cold baked beans which my friend, the C.O. had failed to consume, I had the satisfaction of hearing the message come through on the wires, that our artillery had to concentrate its fire on the valley, as the Germans were preparing for a counter-attack. When I left the warm comfortable dugout, I found that it was quite dark and still snowing. My flashlight was of little use for it only lit up the snowflakes immediately in front of me, and threw no light upon my path. I did not know how I should be able to get back in the darkness through the maze of shell holes and broken wire. Luckily a signaller came up to me and seeing my plight **led me over to a light railway track which had just been laid**, and told me that if I kept on it I should ultimately get back to the Arras-Bethune road. It was a hard scramble, for the track was narrow and very slippery, and had to be felt with the feet rather than seen with the eyes.

You can find the book in two locations, depending on how you want to use it:

Archive.org

Gutenberg Project

And on the location of cemeteries:

*Canon Frederick George Scott wrote:*

Along the Arras-Bethune road are various cemeteries where the men of the different battalions are buried. The greatest care was taken in collecting the dead and making their last resting place as neat and comely as possible. A plank road was constructed to connect the Bethune-Arras road with the Lens-Arras road further forward. It lay in a straight line over the broken ground cut up by trenches and huge craters, and brought one to the headquarters of the siege battery in which my son was a gunner. On all sides stretched the



plain which our men had won. Far off, on clear days, one could see in the distance the little hamlets behind the German lines.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Mar 10, 2016 8:44 am**

Thanks to Rob for identifying the companies for me of the 43 men I had down on my original list of Christie's missing. That was pure magic to me, Rob!

Quick stats:

11 bodies No. 1 Co.

7 bodies No. 2 Co.

11 bodies No. 3 Co.

4 bodies No. 4 Co.

---

33

Lt John Cowan is from 9 Platoon in No.3 Co....I've been riding the theory (still) that it was Lt Cowan's 9 Platoon that was cut down en-masse by the German machine guns just west of the main road where we are looking.

Remainder were not identified by company or were from HQ.

I would have had to discount this theory had 7 bodies or 4 bodies been found for No. 3 Co.

But...like much of what I believe in when it comes to the 16th, 😊 , I hold equal belief in the opinion this theory is neither right nor wrong...at the moment!

[progress]10[/progress]

On a side note, with the adjutant among the 20 of 21 officers listed as casualties (highest percentage of any battalion on April 9th), it is proving difficult, but not impossible to ascertain the locations of the men where they fought and where they fell. This is entirely due to the resourcefulness of CEFSG members posting in this thread.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Mar 10, 2016 6:51 pm**

Rob;

Thank you getting the company information for the missing. The composition of the casualties between companies was a little unexpected. I was expecting to see the heaviest of casualties with the 3rd and 4th companies. They started the day at the craters and went forward. The 1st and 2nd companies started the day mopping up after the initial charge and I would have thought them to have lighter casualties. However, as Ted pointed out, there were heavy casualties later on just west of the main road. Perhaps it was those two companies that suffered the most at this point.

Also, if I look at Norm Christie's assertion that "his" crater contained the men who died at or near the crater, I would have expected to see more 3rd and 4th company soldiers in the list. With a fairly even breakdown between 3/4 company (15 casualties) and 1/2 company (18 casualties), this would not really supports NC's assertion.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Mar 11, 2016 3:08 pm**

Bit by bit I am assembling the final pieces for the detailed report. The case of Private William Milne, V.C. is one of those great treasures, as it is so well covered in the war diaries and literature that it is impossible to dispute.

A key piece of our argument is that all the references to CA40 at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** (AKA *the NC Crater*) do not mean that those men were killed in action at that area and buried there. We already know it is not a crater but it is also critical to show that many of the men were never in that area when killed, no matter what the E-13 files say.

Here is the wording for Private Milne:

*The case of Private William Milne, V.C. is one of the most obvious pieces of evidence against the burial being in a Grave call CA40 back at 51b.A.10.c.9.7, as his adventures as an awardee of the Victoria Cross are well covered in the war diaries and the historical literature. The E-13 WGR would give you every indication that he was killed back at the "jump off" location but facts tell us he was past the Black Line and well on his way to the Red Line when he paid the ultimate sacrifice. Private Milne was already 100 yards past the Arras-Lens Road at the Zwolfer-Graben (A.11.c.00.35 to A.11.a.95.65), perhaps further.*

Here you will see his E-13 WGR still has him back at the "Jump Off" location or shortly past the craters:

FORM E11  
1051-1031-10-11-15

NUMBER 427586 RANK Pte NAME MILNE W.J. *(Victor)*  
UNIT 16th Bn NEXT-OF-KIN Mrs. Daniel Milne *auth #R*  
FILE NO. R.L. 25-M-4803 *10 Anderson Street*  
*Cambristham*  
*Scotland*

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	CA
9-4-17	KILLED IN ACTION .	A.6

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
X	Grave No. 6 A.40 Loc. A.10.9.7 36c. A.10.c.9.7 Burial Report by G.R.C. 1/2 mile S.E. Neuville St. Vaast. 3 3/4 miles N. of Arras .	Authority on R.L. 26.7a BR/2247/ D.V.R. BR/2537 D.V.R.

**VIMY  
MEMORIAL**

That means we can go back into the bowels of the report and adjust the other sections that refer to 51b.A.10.c.9.7 as well. For example, consider the analogy of Privates Brown and Bradshaw:

- If you compare the COD file for Pte. Brown to that of Pte. Bradshaw, the physical description is different. Bradshaw's file says the same location is 0.5 miles southeast of Neuville St. Vaast and 3.75 miles north of Arras, also at 51b.A10.c.9.7. What this means is "do not take the physical descriptions as exact". Trigonometry tells us those two physical descriptions set you 0.9 miles apart - and that is the difference of 51b.A10.0.0 and 51b.A11.5.0, so significant. If you feel inclined to follow the physical descriptions then you will find you are out in the area of 51b.A11.a.5.5, about where CB10 is located.
- There is a lot of additional information that can be extracted from the file for Private Bradshaw, for example:
  - The first page of the COD file reports that he was "Killed in Action" at Vimy and that for Box 12 CEMETERY it says Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Memorial Section.



- The initial burial site on the second page of the COD file is listed as approximately 51b.A10.c.9.7 and the physical description agrees in that it states it was 1/2 mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast. 3 3/4 miles North of Arras and that "Grave Registered".
- When we look at the WGR file, we have what I believe has caused all the confusion. It appears to be saying that the "Place of Burial" is a Grave No. C.A.40 and that the "Location" is at (now corrected on this form) 51b.A10.c.9.7, and then the physical site description that is copied over to page 2 of the COD file.
- I believe that what the file actually means is that the body was buried where it fell in the vicinity of 51b.A10.c.9.7 and that it was collected and buried in the cemetery identified by the 1st Division Burial Officer as CA40.

What we show later in the case of Private Milne (V.C.), which applies to the case of Private Bradshaw as well, it that the reference to 51b.A.10.c.9.7 has nothing to do with where the man was killed or where the remains were found. It is merely a reference location that was carried from file-to-file with no apparent reason.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Fri Mar 11, 2016 8:58 pm**

*rlaughton wrote:*

....

[\*]I believe that what the file actually means is that the body was buried where it fell in the vicinity of 51b.A10.c.9.7 and that it was collected and buried in the cemetery identified by the 1st Division Burial Officer as CA40.

What we show later in the case of Private Milne (V.C.), which applies to the case of Private Bradshaw as well, it that the reference to 51b.A.10.c.9.7 has nothing to do with where the man was killed or where the remains were found. It is merely a reference location that was carried from file-to-file with no apparent reason.

I hope I'm the only one having trouble reconciling those two paragraphs; could you expand on that a bit further Richard?

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Mar 12, 2016 8:23 am**

For sure, this part of the report might help, as it shows the distances and explains that the documents are of no value in this case.

The advance of Private Milne and his escapades to destroy the two machine guns provides such significant evidence in the location of the 16th Battalion, that we have prepared a summary of his movements to document that he was not anywhere near 51b.A.10.c.9.7 as the E-13 WGR file would make us believe. Those words are nothing more than an entry that was copied from file-to-file for many men lost from the 16th Infantry Battalion. The path of the 16th Canadian Scottish truly is as follows:

The men of the 16th Battalion were initially held up after they left their jump-off locations due to the machine gun fire from the far edge of the craters. The Battalion was advancing in sections between the craters which had been blown some time prior to the assault by the French (Claudot and Vissec Groups). The movement of the companies was as follows:

- Lead Right - No. 3 Coy led by Captain Tupper
- Lead Left - No. 4 Coy led by Captain Scroggie

They were followed by the support companies who had the role of "moppers up":

- Following Right - No. 1 Coy led by Lieutenant Bevan
- Following Left - No. 2 Coy led by Lieutenant Mason

The battalion history reports that the men involuntarily paused when the machine guns opened up on them as they passed through opening between the craters (Urquhart 1932). Reference to a trench map would suggest that they are thus moving from a location at about 51b.A.10.c.6.6 through to 51b.A.10.d.0.6. For reference the Vissec Group of craters is back at 51b.A.10.c.7.7 to 51b.A.10.c.9.7. As we have reported, the men already knew where the passages were and the condition of the wire, as they had sent out scouting parties days earlier. At the time of the scouting mission, the wire was still intact, which was reported to the artillery. Regardless of what additional action was taken, we suspect they all knew that the machine guns would be trained on those passage ways between the craters. As expected, heavy loss in the leaders of the 16th Battalion was reported at this phase, thus one could expect to find bodies in that area after the advance.

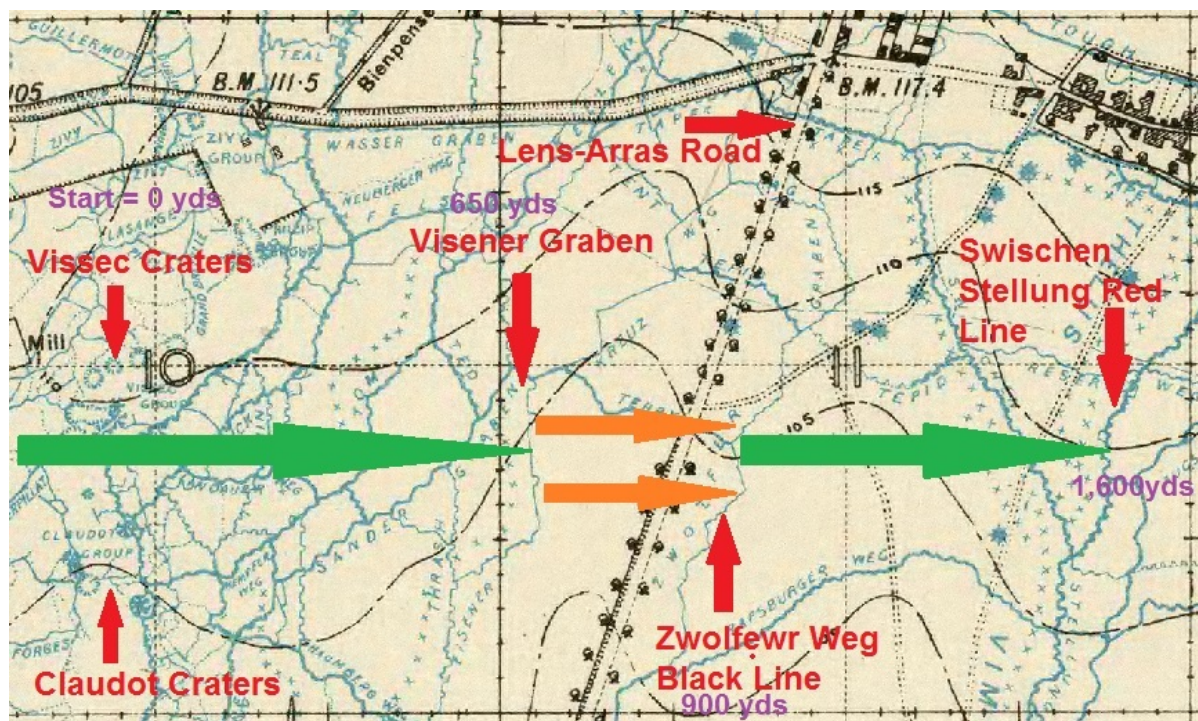
Once through the passage, it is reported that the troops formed up on the far side of the craters. The machine guns had not been silenced and the men of the 16th were now being shot at from the front and the flank. The history reports the machine guns were scattered in the shell holes between the craters and the Black Line at the Lens-Arras Road. Men were still dropping in this area and then it is reported that the first organized resistance is formed at the Visener Graben, some 30 to 40 yards short of the Arras-Lens Road. The trench maps show us the Visener Graben, in this area, runs from 51b.A.10.d.8.0 north to 51b.A.11.c.1.9. The history tells us that the trench was captured at the point of the bayonet.

It was at this point that a German machine gun opened fire on the company and inflicted many casualties, so that group of men would be located well in front of the craters. The trench map grids tell us that they were at least 600 yards past the craters at Visener Graben. There is some variation between the trench maps of 1917 and 1918, so they may have been 650 to 700 yards past the craters if they were only 30 to 40 yards short of the Lens-Arras Road.

Having captured the Visener Graben, the 16th Battalion moved forward towards the Black Line at the Zwolfer Weg, located on the east of the road running more-or-less from 51b.A.11.c.3.0 to 51b.A.11.c.65.75. That is now 950 yards past the craters, so 900 yards past the first group of casualties and more than 400 yards past the second group at the Visener Graben. Clearly, these men were falling in pockets as the battalion advanced and not en masse back at the craters.

It was at this point that a German machine gun once again opened up on the advancing troops from the left. The history reports groups of men approached it from all three sides but with no effect. Unknown to the group of the 16th men that was preparing for yet another assault on the gun, Private Milne had crept towards the gun alone, and from the shelter of a shell hole bombed it out of existence. The men are now at the Black Line, on the east side of the Lens-Arras Road at 51b.A.11.c.6.5.

Private Milne survived his lone attack on the machine gun and was with the rest of the 16th Battalion men as they moved from the Black Line at Zwolfer Weg to the Red Line at the Swischen Stellung. That line ran from approximately 51b.A.11.d.55.00 to 51b.A.11.d.65.45 before it swung back to the west to 51b.A.11.b.00.40. The men are now another 600 yards past the Black Line and a full 1,600 yards past the craters or the general jump-off area where the first men were lost. It was here at the approach to the Red Line that Private Milne took out the second German Machine Gun, for which the combination of the two deeds a posthumous Victoria Cross was awarded. Private Milne did not die in that second attack, but later the same day. The 3rd Brigade held at the Red Line and the 1st Brigade passed through them on to capture the Blue Line at Chain Trench.



*The Path of Private Milne, CEFSG CA40 Project Team*

What the example of Private Milne demonstrates is that in the case of the files on the 16th Infantry Battalion, at least during the Vimy assault, one cannot interpret the information from the Circumstance of Death (Brown Binders) or E-13 WGR files (Black Binders) as a true indication of the location of the fallen. In this case, the historical records as told from the War Diaries and Battalion Histories, provides a far more accurate record of the location of the men.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sat Mar 12, 2016 11:33 am**

Sorry to have to put you to that trouble, but I think there was a greater good! 😊 In fact the semantical misunderstanding was clear from your first lines. 😊

What meaning if any have you ascribed to those groups of digits on the personnel cards?

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Mon Mar 14, 2016 4:51 pm**

With respect to shellfire and the possible of destruction of burial grounds CA39 and CA40, I found a photo (IWM) from July, 1917 showing soldiers in Thelus watching shell bursts. Therefore, it is possible that these sites were destroyed by shell fire.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205078662>

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 Page **10** of **30**



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

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## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 11 of 30

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Tue Mar 15, 2016 12:38 am**

It might be helpful if we could eliminate the "plowed under" possibility, but to do that we would have to know when IWGC finished clearing the battlefield post-war and when the area was brought back into cultivation. I am leaning more and more towards this possibility remembering what happened at Hallu, where the Graves Registration had already recorded the site, but then when the graves "disappeared" apparently no effort was made to excavate to relocate them, even though the area was quite closely identified. Without going back over the Hallu thread, did the Graves Registration people not direct the enquirer whose letters we saw to the grave he was looking for? That might suggest they had recorded the graves, but when they could not be found again, they were simply "written off"? I don't remember what we determined was the fate of such pre-IWGC records, or did we?

Destroyed by shellfire doesn't add up for me. I have a letter where a soldier refers to burying two comrades three or four times who were repeatedly disinterred by shell fire. A lot depends on the depth of the burials, the condition of the ground and the size and type of shells. A long trench burial, 4-6 feet deep would be a very hard thing to obliterate. Even if you blew a mine under such a grave, the bodies would come down in whole and in parts, to be gathered again. If it was known that a grave had been disturbed, and surely it would be, some attempts would be made to gather up the remains and rebury them, as many times as there were remains to collect. No, my gut says this is either a paper error or a grave that was lost as at Hallu.

As long as there were troops in the area to build a grave like those we see, there would be men who knew where it was and would repair it as best they could. Once those troops moved on, probably never to return, those coming into the area would have much less knowledge and interest, but was there shell fire by that point? And once those later men were gone and the battlefield was left to the remaining area inhabitants there might well be an interregnum before the graves registration people appeared. That is also a time I believe when some graves vanished, for whatever reasons.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Tue Mar 15, 2016 2:32 am**

Rob, excellent points. I might add a couple of additional thoughts. I have been examining the aerial photo where we highlighted a possible trench burial - near the tram railway. If you look closely, you can see shell holes in that part of the photograph indicating there was shellfire after the trench was filled. Whether it was sufficient to obliterate the burial site is another question. I wish I had the original photograph because there is a square object in the immediate vicinity that could be of interest.

If you look at some of the other trench burial sites on this thread, you will see that the vegetation grows back fairly quickly and thickly. If you combine that with shellfire damage, poor maintenance, shoddy record keeping and careless individuals, you might just lose a burial trench. The 15th Battalion trench cemetery was just slightly raised beds with few or no crosses -easily disturbed with small artillery.

I am not a records expert but there must be orders or summary of work performed from the CWGC on the clearance of the battlefields. I have read daily reports from some Canadian exhumation companies and they mostly chat about the weather, travel and food.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Tue Mar 15, 2016 10:59 am**

Brad,

I remember hypothesizing that those might be shell holes, but looking around the area I don't see anything similar and it seems most unlikely that three or four shells would strike that particular section and nowhere else. I'm not even sure those are shell holes. They may be, and in that case all we may be seeing is what destroyed that section of trench, but the footpath leading up to, but apparently not past it makes me wonder! Those could be three or four mounds built up to make a grave easier to locate from ground level later; they appear of the same size and equidistant from each other(?). It was a great find on your part, we just need better photos and to view them in stereo.

Bodies would have to be gathered in by carrier parties to be put aboard a tramway, but if that is a grave, obviously bodies from the surrounding area would be brought there directly on foot. Bodies brought from some distance would come by tram, if that was an easier or more direct route, but the tramway adjacent to that site seems to be in a fairly deep cutting and I see no footpath signs leading from the tramway to that trench; perhaps an area where bodies were only collected on foot? But if so, why not locate it next the tramway for easier removal later; or was the later intention to concentrate the graves not known at that time?

I also wonder whether the salvage parties had orders or just chose to bury certain materials? During the war salvage was going full steam and there may well have been orders to bury or destroy certain types of material if they were not worth recovering, but afterwards a lot of material was considered not worth even moving to recover: scrap iron and steel for example. Huge quantities were dumped at sea after both wars, even ammunition with high brass and copper content. On the other hand, I saw a photo recently taken in 1919 of an area fought over in the 100 Days, close to a major road, where Lee Enfield rifles and even German MG tripods were lying around in the open 1.5 years after the Armistice; could the rapid advance and passage of the Allies through that area have meant there was no time for salvage when it was policy and after the war was over no one bothered? The point of all that being, was anything else being buried other than bodies and if so, when? And where were the German dead buried, when and by whom?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Mar 15, 2016 1:50 pm**

**2nd CMR wrote:**

The point of all that being, was anything else being buried other than bodies and if so, when? And where were the German dead buried, when and by whom?

We have in our report references to:

- 600 horses lost on 9 April 1917 buried somewhere in the area - the "crater scenario" sounds logical for them.
- The Canadians saw the Germans using a steam shovel to build a trench to bury their dead.

In a post this morning, I mentioned that the 102nd Battalion was in the same area as the boys on April 9th and A11 would have been in their rear area in March-April 1918.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Mar 17, 2016 8:36 pm**

Thanks to Rob still for digging up the companies/platoons of the men...

Private William Johnstone Milne VC was under the command of Lt John Cowan.

They were both in 3 Co.

Lt John Cowan must have been close to Milne right up until his death (Milne killed later in the day, Cowan in the morning).

Think about anything you have read, or will read about their paths through the battlefield.

It may have been while Milne was forward alone bombing the machine gun nests, his company (perhaps the men we are looking for) were being cut down by the same guns.

I'd be willing to wager Milne was a little forward of 51b.A.11.d.8.8 during his heroics.

Can we confirm this?

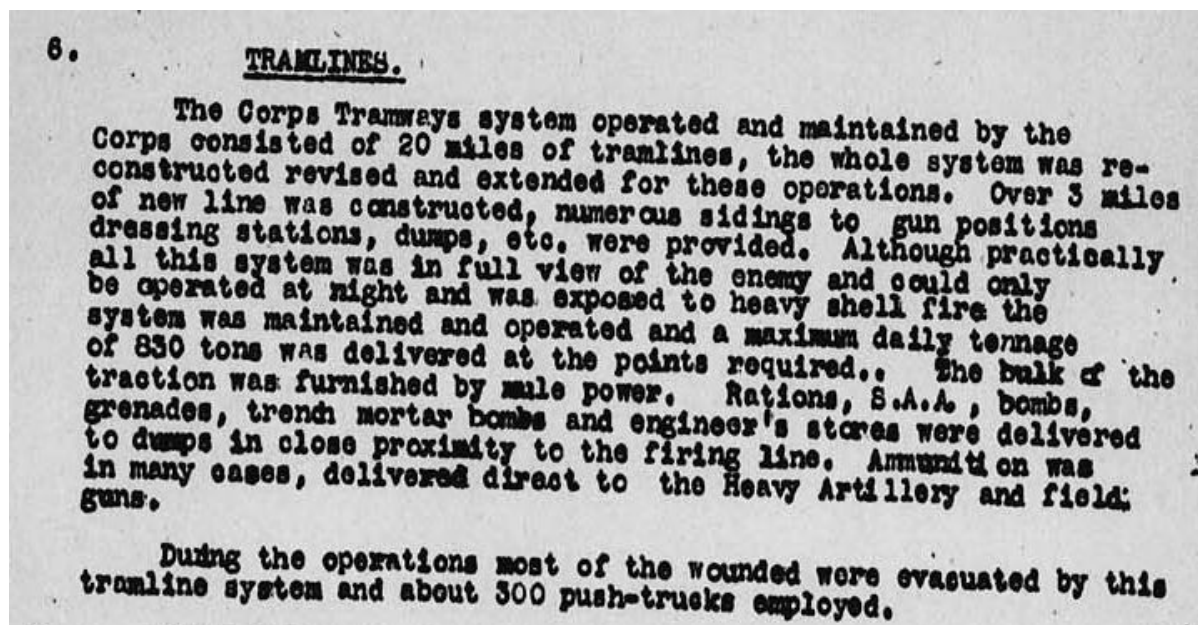
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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Mar 26, 2016 11:05 am**

Henrik sent the Vimy Operations Report and there was mention of the Tramways in Section 6 but unfortunately I do not see the Appendices here:



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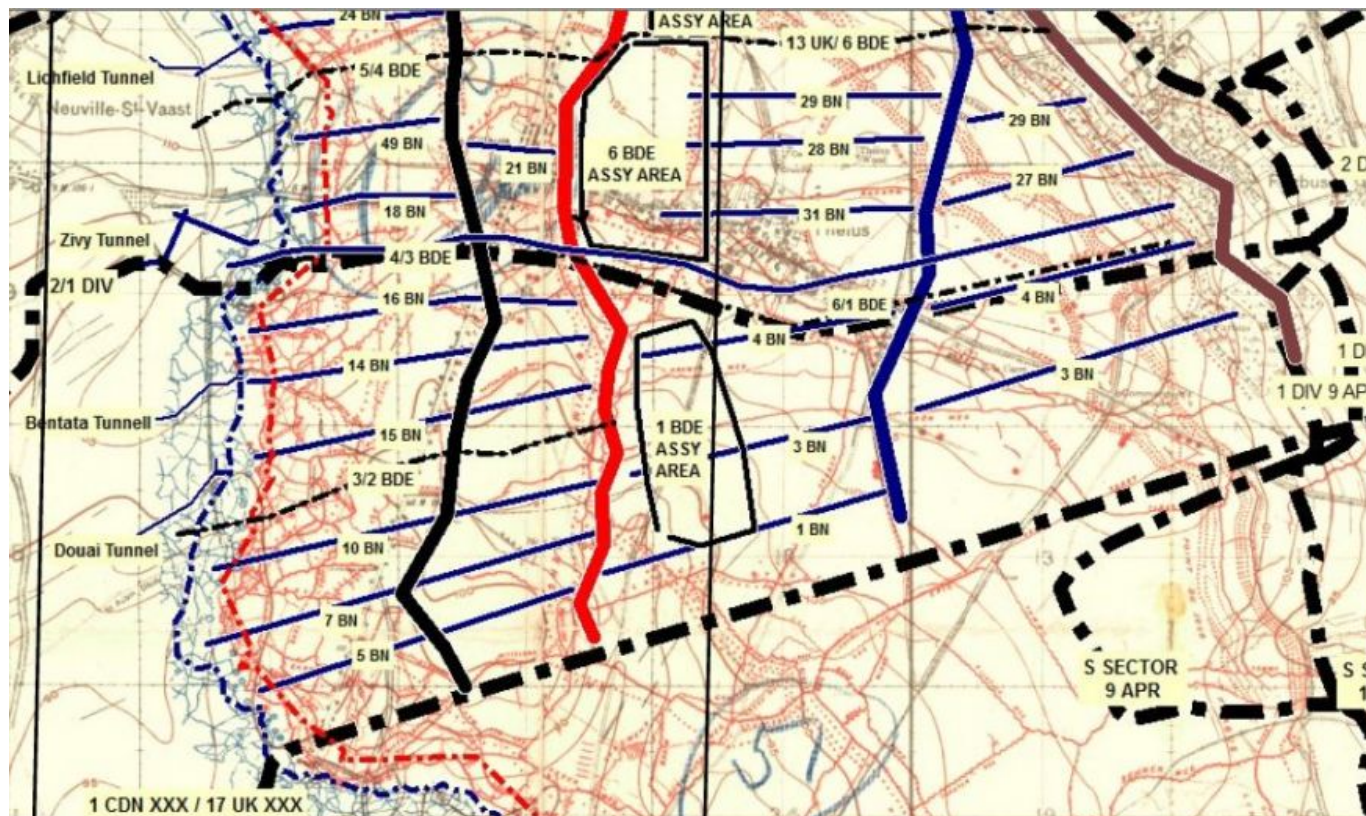
## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Mar 27, 2016 7:00 am**

An interesting view from an extract of the IWM 2011 consolidation. If accurate, they have the 16th Battalion moving well to the north of the exit from the Bentata Subway and the 14th Battalion more in line. I suspect they just put the lines in to show the general area of the movement. This is only a small piece of the whole area. The full PDF version is in the folder.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Apr 01, 2016 12:09 pm**

It struck me that perhaps we were missing something very basic in this analysis. We are believing everything we read, yet we know there are so many errors in the paperwork. What if the Nine Elms Cemetery records are wrong? Consider these statements: (all the casualty COD and E-13 WGR files are in this folder)

1. Is it possible that we all think that 40 or 44 men are missing because we read that to be true, suggesting that somehow the Imperial War Graves Commission misplaced that many soldiers during the battlefield clearance? Is it possible that this topic was never raised before because these 40 men are not missing, they were recovered and have been buried all this time? Think back to yourself and ask "where did I hear about this and what proof have I seen that these men are missing, other than conjecture"?
2. What if CA39 was not destroyed in subsequent battles, instead all the men were exhumed from the site on the east side of the Arras-Lens Road and moved to Nine Elms in **PLOT 6** (you will see that below)? We know that the cross survived what was supposed to be some extreme event, so how did that happen if it was in the middle of the burial ground? Even if there was some destruction, I believe someone posted here already that their comrades would gather the pieces and bury them again, not just leave them scattered over the battlefield.
3. In that alternative, what if it was CA40 that was destroyed by the shellfire in subsequent battles? What if this statement by the CWGC actually refers to CA40 and not CA39: "*Other special memorials record the names of 44 soldiers from Canada .... buried in other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire*". Remember that the CWGC text for CA40 specifically refers to 44 men when it says "Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917. If you read what it says about CA39 you hear about either 39 or 46 men - not 44 - "CA 39," contained the graves of 46 Canadian soldiers, 39 of whom belonged to the 15th Battalion"".
4. The long row of either Memorial Stones or a Trench Burial, in what would have been **PLOT 6** (see above and below) has 44 stones - you can count them in Greg's photographs. That agrees with the

list of 44 on the GRRF (2617976, 2617977, 2617978). Why are there not 46 stones if that was what was lost at CA39? That answer I believe lies in grave IV.B.9 (Pte Weaver #800117) and grave IV.D.3 (Pte. Bradley #77632). Pte. Bradley for certain was initially in CA39 (his name was also on the cross) and now he is officially buried in Plot 4 Row D Grave 3. How did he make it there if the rest did not? Were his remains easily identifiable so they did not put him in the **PLOT 6** Trench Grave? This assumes I am correct that the difference between the 46 and 44 is the two that were identified and put in the main part of the cemetery.

If you put those three components together you end up with a situation where you have accounted for all the remains. Let us assume from the moment that *Sacred Places* is correct and there are 539 Canadians in Nine Elms, of which 99 are unknown. Can we account for all of those by battalion to see who is missing? For example, there are three (3) men of the 14th Battalion in 1.C.18 to 1.C.20 so they are counted. I will do the rest, as was completed for Quebec Cemetery, Cherisy (that solved that case).

To get more of a handle on this I went back and looked at the men we had not checked before - the men who were not with the 15th Infantry Battalion. Here is a bit of what I found:

- Pte. Harry Dingwall #730549 (13th Coy CMGC) is probably the most interesting case. His remains were reported to be buried in CA39 at **51b.A.11.c.3.0** on the east side of the Arras-Lens Road. Coincidentally, he was also reported to have been found at the site of the TRENCH (as is it is not a CRATER) at NC's **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. It does not stop there, it says he was buried in **Plot 6 Row A Grave 39**. That would place him in the spot that is currently marked for Sgt. Herbert Ward of the 15th Battalion. That comes from the fact that if there was a PLOT 6 it would be the Memorial Row along the fence on the border where there are 39 names of 15th Battalion men and 7 others.
- Sgt. William Bellamy #46456 of the 13th Battalion is recorded on **Stone 4** in the Memorial Row and he was found at **51b.A.11.c.3.0** which is CA39. His neighbour, in name only, is Sgt. Colin Wisdom, but guess where they found him? Would you believe at the NC TRENCH (not CRATER) at **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. How did someone that was supposed to have been buried in the now famous CRATER/TRENCH end up in CA39 and then disappear (unless he is in the Memorial Row Trench). His name I assume would not be on the cross, even if at CA39 as he was not 15th Battalion.
- Pte. Alexander Caldwell #809122 of the 10th Battalion was also in CA39 at **51b.A.11.c.3.0**. It says he fell at the German front line, so that would have been way back at the Trench Burial area in C.10 where they found Bellamy. That means we have two sets of remains that were being moved forward from Sector C.10.c to Sector C.11.c, as we expected for the CA40 men of the 16th Battalion.
- Pte. Stanley Robson #426920, Pte. George Berry #925195 and Pte. Hilliard Dusang #198264 were all in CA39 at **51b.A.11.c.3.0**. All of them had their graves registered, they were not "*lost on the battlefield*". Pte. Stanley Robson is specifically noted to be buried in Nine Elms Cemetery but he is marked by Stone 41 in the Memorial Row, unless it really is **PLOT 6** or he is in another grave within the cemetery?

The next step, I believe, is to tabulate all the graves in Nine Elms Cemetery. If you recall the video on *The Missing*, the only check that was made was to look for stones that were marked to the 16th Battalion. I went back and watched the video again to be sure - there was no reference to a check for graves of UNKNOWN Canadian Soldiers. In hindsight I had to ask myself even that simple question "*Did we expect to see the names of the 40 plus men of the 16th Battalion on the headstones in the video?*". Of course not, that would have meant they knew they were buried in that cemetery. Was there any reference in the video to "*90+ headstones that were not marked and thus might be the missing 40+ men of the 16th Battalion*"? No there was not. I do not know what others thought when they watched "*The Missing*" but I walked away with the clear agreement that there were 40+ missing men. The only reason we believed that is because WE read the CWGC page that said there were 44 men missing and we matched the two pieces of evidence to come to the conclusion that  $A+B=C$ .

Here is the spreadsheet that I started some time ago for NINE ELMS CEMETERY that has all the CWGC data in Tab 1 (RED), the 15th Battalion in Tab 2 (YELLOW) and now I will do the Missing Men in Tab 3 (BLUE). The last tab is just underway.

There are five (5) errors in that database that I have found in the first few minutes. I have sent those to the CWGC and marked them in the database in **RED**.

In the end that list expanded to more than a dozen.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri Apr 01, 2016 1:04 pm**

Richard;

Your post reminds me of a quote from Barbara Tuchman's book *"The Guns of August"*:

*..."that marvelous human capacity to see what you expect to see even if it is not there"*

I have been having the same thoughts that the bodies were recovered and concentrated into a cemetery and the process and paperwork were deficient in recording the event. The Canadians were at Vimy Ridge for a few months after the attack and had plenty of time to record the cemeteries and to build memorials, unlike other battles such as Somme and Passchendaele. It just seems reasonable that they would find and recover such as well documented cemetery, even if partially destroyed. I guess I have more faith in the efforts of the Corp and its clearance team than the paperwork that followed.

---

## Re: Arras Road Cemetery, Thelus: Problem #2 (15th Battalion)

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Apr 02, 2016 4:14 pm**

These numbers have changed as the spreadsheet has been corrected and revised so the final number at the page link will differ. The concept of this post however remains the same.

I finished the Nine Elms Excel database sheet and you can see the totals to date here:

[viewtopic.php?p=100762#p100762](http://www.viewtopic.php?p=100762#p100762)

I might be missing something very basic, but there are 70 graves in that cemetery that could belong to men of the 16th Battalion. Of these 4 are marked for the 16th Battalion and 66 have no unit affiliation. Those could all be men of the 16th Battalion, which means nobody is missing?

I do not know why Norm has 20 more Canadians in the cemetery than I have, including 8 extra Unknown Canadians. I will check all the counts again in the morning with a fresh set of eyes.

The spreadsheet is linked from the other post or can be retrieved here:

[http://www.mediafire.com/download/0gwbw ... n\\_Tab.xlsx](http://www.mediafire.com/download/0gwbw...n_Tab.xlsx)

Note the 5 tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet which I presume you will only see if you download the file rather than view it on-line.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Apr 03, 2016 2:40 pm**

It appears the me that these 24 men in Nine Elms all came from CA39:

[http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 618051.JPG](http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d...618051.JPG)



They just did not use "ditto" as those at the top and the named ones are from there and on the list. That could mean these are all 15th Battalion men and thus not available UNKNOWN GRAVES for 16th Battalion men.

That also means that there is duplication in Nine Elms Military Cemetery if some of them are marked in the Memorial Row for the 15th Battalion and they are also buried in the main part of the cemetery. Bradley is definitely on the CA39 cross. Weaver appears on the COG-BR as "Wearer".

For now I am going to MARK these graves as "Not Available" for 16th Battalion men as it appears to me they are all 15th Battalion group. If we are still over the number required, it does not matter.

There are now six (6) tabs in the spreadsheet with the new tab counting only the UCS and tabulating them by burial location as to whether they are available for consideration as a possible 16th Battalion grave site. We needed to have at least 36 grave sites (see here) to be able to say that there are enough graves sites available at Nine Elms to account for the missing men of the 16th Battalion.

If you look at TAB 6 you will now see that there are 31 sites that are distinct possibilities for 16th Battalion graves, another 6 that are "maybe" as there is no clear evidence either way. We also have 9 sites (see TAB 5) that someone has decided are UBS when I believe they are clearly UCS sites. It appears if they do not know they call it a UBS site, even if it is in a Canadian sector with a number of other men.

That means we have 46 sites with remains that may represent the 36 that are needed, so there is a strong possibility now that the men of the 16th Battalion (or at least some of them) are already in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

I believe that if the 4 alternative locations were checked with GPR or a similar means that you would find more remains but not a great concentration of men. It is quite possible that you might find small groupings at each of those sites, perhaps other sites as well. It is of equal or greater probability that the reason the CWGC never said they were lost is that they are not lost - they are in the cemetery.

Remember that in making this analysis I EXCLUDED all the men that I think might also be 15th Battalion men that are in graves in the main part of the cemetery, even if they have a second memorial stone along the wall. If those are NOT men of the 15th Battalion then that frees another large group that could be 16th Battalion men.

**It takes me back to that question:**

***Who told us that there were 40 or more men of the 16th Battalion missing and why did we assume that to be factual from the start? Nobody else has ever said they were missing, certainly not the CWGC. We just assumed that after we watched the NC video that they were missing. I now have doubts. At the minimum, prove to me that they are missing and we can go hunt for them, but now I would have to question if it was even worth the hunt. Certainly it is not worth spending tens of thousands of dollars until these questions are answered - no matter whose project is being considered.***

My analysis is based on CWGC data and real numbers. If you disagree, please say so and explain why you disagree and I will research it further.

**UPDATE:**

In doing this another question was answered. I missed it all this time. The second cemetery on the west side of the Lens-Arras Road in 3rd Brigade war diary is the 14th Battalion burial ground - Nine

## Elms Military Cemetery! Right in front of us all this time.

Initially I gave some thought as to whether some of the men of the 16th Battalion might have been buried there directly, but on further review I see that is not the case. Let me record that reason here for future use. He is what the CWGC says:

The cemetery was begun, after the capture of Vimy Ridge, by the burial in what is now Plot I, Row A of 80 men of the 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion, who fell on the 9th April 1917; and this and the next row were filled by June 1917. Three burials were made in Plot I, Row C, in July 1918. The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast...

From that I went back and checked the COG-BR documents, as I had always thought there were a few pages missing. They were not, as they start immediately after the 3<sup>rd</sup> grave in Row C, those being the ones from July 1918. From the date in the upper right corner in the red stamp it appears to be the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.**  
EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.  
**Burial Return.**

REF. MAP. FRANCE 51.B.1/40,000.

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial... NINE ELMS .....

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	Was cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.	Remarks.
1	C	4	A.16.a.9.9.	No.	Nil.	No.	Apparently Canadian Soldier, no means of identification.
1	C	5	A.16.b.3.8.	Yes	UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER. 443342 Pte. D.W. Jesty, 14th Canadian Bn. Killed in Action 51.N.11.A.11.C.2.4.	No.	
	C	6	A.10.d.2.4.	No.	Nil.	No.	Identified by shoulder title to be Canadian Scottish Soldier.
	C	7	A.10.d.00.00.	No.	Nil.	No.	
1	C	8	A.17.c.0.7.	Yes	G.R.U. 772016 Pte. P. Balfour, 1st Canadian Bn. Killed in Action 9/4/17.	No.	
1	C	9	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	G.R.U.2. Canadian Corps. 719914 Pte. A. King, 16th Canadian Bn. Killed in Action. 51.N.11.A.11.C.2.4.	No.	
1	C	10	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	Unknown Canadian Soldier.	No.	No means of identification.
1	C	11	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	Unknown Canadian Soldier.	No.	No means of identification.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Apr 07, 2016 11:12 am**

Have we come across this information somewhere already?

### Norm Christie posted an update

#### Story update

Help recover THIS Vimy Hero. Private Robert Owen from Belmont, Manitoba. Died, age 29, April 9, 1917, at the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Pte. Owen's was the **only name still legible** on the cross marking crater CA40 where he was buried on the battlefield, after the cross was hit by a shell in 1917-18. The cross was brought into Lievin Community Cemetery Extension northwest of Vimy in 1919 with **four unknown Canadian soldiers**. Pte. Owen and 43 other comrades are believed still buried in CA40.

Are we still hoping to find a photo of the cross with all the names legible?

Do we have information on where these four UCS were exhumed from?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Apr 07, 2016 11:16 am**

We have everything except a photograph of the cross.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Apr 07, 2016 8:32 pm**

I found a photograph of the cross. The inscription says *"This cross was originally erected on the battlefield by the battalion."* Can we assume that the memorial cross was erected at the grave site (as we have seen with other memorial crosses) and can we assume that the cross was recovered after the war when they concentrated the graves? If so, do we have another CA39 situation where the grave site was supposedly destroyed by shellfire but the memorial cross remains intact.

I am trying to arrange a visit to see the cross in person and will report back with my findings.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Apr 21, 2016 11:29 am**

While researching some men in Ecoivres Military Cemetery I came across this memorial to the men of the 60th Battalion that were KIA on 26 November 1916 and supposedly in the same crater where NC believes the men of the 16th Battalion were buried.

It is referenced within this topic at these two (2) posts:

[viewtopic.php?p=99187#p99187](#)

[viewtopic.php?p=99226#p99226](#)

The document in the Ecoivres Military Cemetery gives us some additional information as it states that the men were buried **in the front line opposite the left end of the Bentata Trench** at Sheet **51b.A.10.c.73.05**. That physical description does match the trench coordinates.

Note that is considerably different than the report that they were buried at **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. The exhumation says they were found at **51b.A.10.c.9.5**. Those are close but they are not at the left end of Bentata Trench.

One of these is very wrong? Note the reference that the grave is "First Army Serial No. 1058" which makes me think that there would be record of this in the 1st Army documents. Those are probably in the UK National Archives at KEW. Maybe someone on the GWF can assist in that regard?

This information does not alter my current thinking that there is no evidence that the men of the 16th Battalion are not already in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, it just throws another wrench into the gears!



REF MAP 51b 1/40000

# CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

## Burial Return.

NUMBER. 18.  
9/5/19. 18.

D.G.R. & E.  
RECEIVED  
23 MAY 1919

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial. NINE ELMS.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	E	11	A 10 a 2.8.	NO	NIL	NO
1	E	12	A 10 c 9.6.	YES	60th Canadian Infantry. Sacred to the Memory of Major S.L. Thorne. Lt. H.G. Punnett. 457329 Pte. W.F. Godbeer. 139615 " G. Brownlee. 201344 " H. Compton. 125698 " <del>Meik. Meik.</del> Killed in Action Nov 26 1916. Buried at this spot. R.I.P.	NO
1	E	13				
1	E	14				
1	E	15				
1	E	16				
1	E	17				

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13/2/18. Army Form

# FIRST ARMY. GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

REPORT No. 3. SCHEDULE No. 43

Commune: MONT ST. ELOY. COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.

PLACE OF BURIAL Ecoivres Military Cemetery.

Map ref. Sheet 51c. F.14.a.4.9.8

Land belongs to \_\_\_\_\_ This cancels Schedule No. 64 of previous R

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erect or Despatch
IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS & MEN OF THE 60th CANADIAN BATTALION					



KILLED IN THE H.Q. DUG-OUT OF A. COY.  
ON NOVEMBER 26th 1916 AND BURIED  
IN THE FRONT LINE OPPOSITE THE LEFT  
END OF BENTATA TRENCH AT Sheet 51b.  
A.10.c.73.05.

3  
457229 Major S. L. THORNE  
139515 Lieut. H.G. PUNNET  
123698 Pte. W.F.T. GODBEER.  
201344 Pte. G. BROWNLEE  
Pte. W. MOIR.  
Pte. H. COMPTON.

The graves of the abovenamed Officers and Men are reported  
First Army Serial No. 1058.

ENTERED. a 1 23-3-18  
SLIPS CHECKED. 24 21

(6 31 5) W8219—M901 20,000 10/16 HWV(P237A, Forms/W8372/1  
12S94—M1303 30,000 1/17

REC'D. O.P.

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
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## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 12 of 30

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Apr 21, 2016 12:44 pm**

Once again, in the right place at the right time on many occasions during my voyage...

Spoke with a couple of representatives at CWGC Arras this afternoon and apprised them of situation re 16th and Hallu cases...

They were incredibly receptive, and have asked me to forward information on both cases upon my return.

As for the men of the 16th, I can only say I am convinced we know where the CWGC description of GRAVE CA 40 is.

Where the men went to???...adjusting the meter to 10% certainty now.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Apr 21, 2016 3:13 pm**



The depression...



The Mill...



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri May 27, 2016 7:55 am**

I am taking a last look at the numbers to try and wrap up **Phase 2** of this research. **Phase 1** of the project was a detailed look at all the possible locations for the burial sites. Phase 2 has been a review of the actual missing men to see if it was possible that they are not missing at all.

I believe we have now accounted for all the remains in Nine Elms Cemetery, as exhibited here:



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Canadian	Total	Unknown	Known		Total	Total	Unknown	Known		Notes
2	1	12	1	11		Alias	2	0	2		updated with COG-BR information on Apr
3	2	2	1	1		French	11	0	11		1.C.19 not 14th now UCS
4	3	7	1	6		British	151	46	105		1.C.20 not 14th as patch shows 1st Bn.
5	4	5	3	2		Canadians	527	97	430		1.D.40 GRRF changed to read UBS and COG
6	5	73	3	70		TOTAL	691	143	548		1.D.16 & 1.D.17 could be UCS, not a UBS ar
7	7	12	0	12							1.G.17 probably UCS not UBS in that area
8	10	45	2	43		Spreadsheet	691				1.G.17 probably UCS not UBS in that area
9	13	3	0	3		Difference	0				1.E.8,9,10 probably UCS as not UBS in that
10	14	80	6	74							3.D.11 changed to Canadian Infantry 9th M
11	15	77	2	75							1.G.19 probably Canadian as COG-BR does
12	16	20	4	16							
13	18	10	0	10							
14	19	4	0	4							
15	20	2	0	2							
16	21	16	1	15							
17	22	3	1	2							
18	24	6	0	6							
19	25	6	0	6							
20	26	11	3	8							
21	27	4	0	4							
22	28	5	1	4							
23	29	8	0	8							
24	31	1	0	1							
25	42	1	0	1							
26	60	6	0	6							
27	1st CMR	25	0	25							
28	Can Sig. Corp.	1	0	1							
29	CFA	2	0	2							
30	CMGC	11	1	10							
31	CMMGS	1	0	1							
32	PPCLI	1	0	1							
33	No Unit	67	67	0							
34	TOTAL	527	97	430							

My review of the details of those numbers leads me to believe that it is quite possible that all the men are accounted for in Nine Elms. I can not find any evidence that there are 40 men missing. That is not to say that I do not believe that there are more remains on the Vimy Battlefield in that sector, rather that there is no evidence that there is a mass grave somewhere. If you recall what the CWGC reported:

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

That says the men were recovered. I went through this process backwards, it was my mistake. I assumed that it was factual that these 44 men were missing (40 or so if you count the ones found).

There are two components to this review. The missing me of the **15th Battalion** and the missing men of the **16th Battalion**. If I was to do a GPR study anywhere at this time (**Phase 3**), it would be in front of the memorial stones for the men of the 15th Battalion. It may not be individual graves of men lost in battle but rather the mixed remains of what was left of the CA39, perhaps collected and re-buried more than once by the men of the battalion. Here again, remember that the CWGC said that they did recover remains from CA39:

ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY, THELUS, on the roadside a little North of Nine Elms Cemetery. This graveyard, originally called "CA 39," contained the graves of 46 Canadian soldiers, 39 of whom belonged to the 15th Battalion, and most of whom fell on the 9th April 1917.

They do not say that all of these men's graves were lost. Had this been the case, they would not have included this in the list of cemeteries that were recovered. There is only a generic statement that some of the men's graves were lost and it does not say from which battlefield cemeteries:



Other special memorials record the names of 44 soldiers from Canada and ten from the United Kingdom, buried in other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.

My original error, at the very beginning, was when I assumed the 44 men referred to in that statement were the 44 men in CA 40. Later I erred again in assuming that it was the men in CA39. I might as well go for a third try (error) and suggest that it is 44 Canadian men that are missing and the number at 40 or 44 is merely coincidental.

The exhumations and reburials appear to have been made in April and May 1919 and it only reports "First Army", so it may be difficult to track down which unit (Labour Company?) undertook the work. If we can determine that, we might be able to track down the records in the UK National Archives. The hunt begins!

Here is the detailed tally that shows that all the men from CA39 and CA40 are quite possibly in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery at Thelus:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
1	Plot	Row	Grave	Not Available	surname	Details	CA	buried	death 1	rank	unit 1
2	1	A	22	a	UCS						
3	1	A	23	a	UCS						
4	1	B	12	a	UCS						16th Bn.
5	1	C	4	a	UCS	51b.A.16.a.9.9					
6	1	C	5	a	UCS	51b.A.16.b.3.8					
7	1	C	6	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.2.4					16th Bn.
8	1	C	7	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.0.0					16th Bn.
9	1	C	10	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.20.41					
10	1	C	11	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.20.41					
11	1	E	7	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.3.6					
12	1	G	9	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.2.0		05-28-17			
13	1	G	10	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.2.0		05-28-17			
14	1	G	14	a	UCS	51b.A.10.c.6.3					
15	1	G	18	a	UCS	51b.A.10.c.65.00					
16	1	G	31	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.3.5.	CA2				
17	1	G	32	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.1.8					
18	1	G	33	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.1.8					
19	1	G	34	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.1.8					
20	1	G	35	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.1.8					
21	1	G	37	a	UCS						16th Bn.
22	1	G	38	a	UCS	51b.A.10.d.2.8					
23	3	A	1	a	UCS	51b.A.16.d.6.1					
24	3	A	4	a	UCS	51b.A.16.d.6.1					
25	3	A	5	a	UCS	51b.A.16.d.6.1					
26	3	A	6	a	UCS	51b.A.16.d.6.1					
27	3	F	7	a	UCS						
28	4	B	1	a	UCS	51b.A.11.c.3.0	CA39				are all of t
29	4	D	11	a	UCS	51b.A.11.7.6					
30	4	E	4	a	UCS	51b.A.11.7.6					this had a

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
1	Plot	Row	Grave	Not Available	surname	Details	CA	buried	death 1	rank	unit 1
31	4	E	20	a	UCS						
32	1	C	19	m	UCS	51b.A.17.c.8.7					
33	1	D	10	m	UCS	51b.A.16.c.70.45					
34	1	D	11	m	UCS	51b.A.16.c.6.4					
35	1	D	12	m	UCS	51b.A.16.c.6.4					
36	1	G	36	m	UCS	51b.A16.b.1.0 ?					
37	1	G	40	m	UCS	no information I can find?					
38	1	A	5	x	UCS	NO SERGEANTS MISSING				04-09-17	14th Bn.
39	1	A	14	x	UCS						14th Bn.
40	1	A	24	x	UCS						14th Bn.
41	1	A	24	x	UCS						14th Bn.
42	1	A	27	x	UCS					Sergeant	14th Bn.
43	1	C	18	x	UCS						14th Bn.
44	1	C	20	x	UCS						1st Bn. (p
45	1	D	2	x	UCS					18-04-17	5th Bn.
46	1	D	6	x	UCS						2nd Bn.
47	1	D	13	x	UCS	51b.A.16.d.3.4	CA1				
48	1	D	14	x	UCS	51b.A.16.d.3.4	CA1				
49	1	D	15	x	UCS	51b.A.16.d.3.4	CA1				
50	1	D	20	x	UCS	51b.A.16.d.1.1					
51	1	D	21	x	UCS	51b.A.16.d.3.4	CA1				
52	1	F	21	x	UCS						10th Bn.
53	1	G	4	x	<a href="#">UCS (Mann or Petit)</a>						10th Bn.
54	1	G	5	x	UCS						15th Bn.
55	1	G	11	x	UCS					04-09-17	15th Bn.
56	1	G	21	x	<a href="#">UCS (Simmonds)</a>					L/Cpl.	4th Bn.
57	1	G	22	x	UCS						4th Bn.
58	1	G	23	x	UCS						4th Bn.
59	1	G	27	x	UCS						3rd Bn.
60	3	A	11	x	UCS						5th Bn.
61	3	B	7	x	UCS						5th Bn.
62	3	D	1	x	UCS	51b.A.4.d.7					probably
63	3	D	8	x	UCS	51b.A.4.c.7.1					probably
64	3	D	10	x	UCS	51b.A.4.b.5.6					probably
65	3	D	11	x	UCS	51b.A.4.c.7.1					9th Mach
66	3	D	15	x	UCS						26th Bn.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
1	Plot	Row	Grave	Not Available	surname	Details	CA	buried	death 1	rank	unit 1
67	3	D	16	x	UCS						26th Bn.
68	3	D	19	x	UCS	51b.A.6.c.90.50					probably 2nd Di
69	3	D	20	x	UCS	51b.A.6.c.90.50 ?					probably same i
70	3	E	8	x	UCS						28th Bn.
71	3	F	9	x	UCS						26th Bn.
72	3	F	13	x	UCS	51b.A.4.c.1.9					5th Infantry Brig
73	3	F	14	x	UCS	51b.A.4.d.4.5					probably 2nd Di
74	3	F	15	x	UCS	51b.A.4.d.4.5					probably 2nd Di
75	3	F	16	x	UCS	51b.A.4.d.4.5					probably 2nd Di
76	3	F	17	x	UCS	51b.A.4.d.4.5					probably 2nd Di
77	4	B	2	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
78	4	B	3	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
79	4	B	4	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
80	4	B	5	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
81	4	B	6	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
82	4	B	7	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
83	4	B	8	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
84	4	B	10	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
85	4	B	11	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
86	4	B	12	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
87	4	B	13	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
88	4	B	14	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
89	4	B	15	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
90	4	B	16	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
91	4	B	17	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
92	4	B	18	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
93	4	B	19	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
94	4	B	20	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
95	4	C	9	x	UCS						21st Bn.
96	4	D	2	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
97	4	D	4	x	UCS	believed 51bA.11.c.3.0	CA39				all in same grou
98	4	E	4	x	UCS						this is the dupli
99	4	E	10	x	UCS - no 22nd KIA				04-17-17		22nd Bn.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri May 27, 2016 8:58 am**

I have spend countless hours trying to find evidence that soldiers of the 16th battalion were still lost somewhere in the battlefield. Today, I do not have a definite conclusion as to their ultimate location but on the balance of probabilities, I believe the following:

- (1) The soldiers were not originally buried in the "crater" as Norm Christie suggests.
- (2) The soldiers were probably buried somewhere further in the battlefield, possibly at 51b.A.11.d.8.8
- (3) the soldiers were exhumed after the war and placed in Nine Elms. They were not given individual makers as they were more likely placed in a mass grave on April 10th with no individual identification (buried by another battalion in a hurried manner under possible artillery fire)
- (4) They are "missing" because of faulty paperwork.

Somewhere in the British Archives there are records of the exhumation process (diaries, orders, etc) that may come to light in the future.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Fri May 27, 2016 2:59 pm**

A comment on the GPR effort, speaking from experience, having done a number of these for cemeteries of this age. The GPR will not be able to discriminate individual bodies and to count them. As much as some television shows would have us believe GPR simply does not have that resolution. In the case of these graves in particular we're likely to see disturbances in the ground associated with the bodies (versus areas of undisturbed ground) - so able to tell there are bodies present but not number



of them. From the photos I've seen of similar trench burials and some testing I've done over some trench burials in the past there's not enough of a gap between the bodies to get discrete anomalies to 'count' the number of soldiers buried.

A further thing that can cause issues with the GPR in the case of your recommendation of doing it at Nine Elms is the way the cemeteries are constructed - from what I understand they buried 'I' beams in the ground along the length of the headstones to anchor them in - metal can cause large ringing in the data which can further complicate interpretation of the data.

The facts are quite interesting - I'm still left wondering about Mr. Christie's comment of the CA40 Marker being damaged and turned in years later to the CWGC. If CA40 had been exhumed originally I understood protocol at the time was to remove all grave markers from the field. Either this wasn't done in this case or perhaps the original marker was lost/moved and later found?

A question on the verbiage of the quotes for CA39 and CA40 - the CWGC say "were buried" and "contained" indicating that they were concentrated at a point in time - what's the source and date of those comments? If written long after the war I'd understand the assumption that they were concentrated, but if written closer to the time the concentration activities were underway it would be more interesting and telling that they indeed did find them.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Tue Jun 07, 2016 7:15 pm**

Broadcast email from Norm Christie's battlefields.ca website:

The search for CA40 continues. We have started our on-site investigation, and will release results on our findings shortly. This will be a challenging process and your support is more important than ever. We can make this happen. We have expanded our search to uncover the entrances to Zivy Cave. The cave was used by the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade HQ, 21st Battalion, among others on April 9, 1917. It could hold 2000 men and has been covered over since 1919!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jun 07, 2016 8:42 pm**

I did not get that Brad and I do not see it - not sure of the details - do you have a link?

The only message I got was that Ted had contributed \$144 to fund the search?? I assume that is \$100 plus \$1 for each man missing? I am sure Ted has a story about that donation.

I have no knowledge about the link of Zivy Cave to CA40 so you have my interest.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Wed Jun 08, 2016 10:55 am**

If nothing else it was a good lesson for all of us in how we make assumptions. A fact that extends to every area of human enquiry. I get the impression from the quote above that Norm Christie may be altering course as well. 😊

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jun 08, 2016 11:07 am**

I'm just a number-nerd. 44 wasn't enough, so I just added another one for every year...text of my message to save you a trip...

Dear Norm

I truly believe you are the right man for this monumental task and I wholeheartedly agree with many who also believe you should have been nominated for the Order of Canada long ago. Few have touched so many Canadian families as you have - your efforts make Canada stronger.

While I do not agree with you as to where these men will be found, I do not want you to consider me as another obstacle in your noble quest. Keep the faith - Lambis Englezos encountered many obstacles from various groups and levels of government in the case of the missing men in Fromelles.

It is important we set our differences aside and support each other as we have over 10,000 misplaced Canadian soldiers of The Great War - men who should be honoured alongside their comrades in beautiful CWGC cemeteries, and not left behind on the battlefield. We need to finish their undertaking - these men were already given a dignified, yet hurried burial by their comrades, and sometimes even by their enemy (as in the case of the Hallu Eight - men who were originally buried by the German Alpine Korps on the 12th of August, 1918).

We will do more than remember them - we will find them!

Best regards, Edward Walshe, Jr. Eng.

We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a single excuse. - Rudyard Kipling

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **jbradshaw**

Posted: **Mon Jun 20, 2016 1:14 pm**

my brother let me know Norm Christie was involved in his quest to find C.A.40, our mom had seen the PBS show and sure enough our Great Grandfather was one of the 44 - Pte. Robert E. Bradshaw

I watched Norm's Missing show and had some reservations on his findings and wanted to know more before I myself invested in his production.

Thankful to this internet that led me to this discussion but more importantly thank you to this group for taking so much of your own time to research this so thoroughly. I am humbled seeing your passion, and Norm and his crew as well, the dedication to make things right for these "names" on a list. Your passion to help seek them out and make it right is incredible to me, you all are hero's in my books.

Unfortunately we don't have any photo's of him but there was a poem that was sent back that he wrote. I'm going to post it here, maybe fire you all up to finish this and find them for real. I know one soldiers family is rooting for you to get him his due.

Thank you again, God Speed.

Jason Bradshaw

The Front Line

In front, a ragged shell-torn waste, barbed wire and noisome weeds;  
The grave of many a gallant man who died for his country's needs;  
The bar between two mighty foes, alert, watchful and still,  
Like savage beasts as they pause and wait, 'ere they spring to rend and kill.

The rattle of the machine guns spraying death along the line;  
The boom of a distant field gun, then a shrill increasing whine.  
A crash - an acrid blinding smoke, a shower of stones and dirt -  
Then casually someone asks, "Is anybody hurt?"

A dazzling streak of light shoots up and bursts, a pretty sight,  
Transforming No Mans Land into a fairy land of light;  
'Tis hard to think a thing so fair is but a means of death,  
Yet as each "star-shell" shoots aloft we crouch and hold our breath.

And then a low-voiced call comes down for "stretcher bearers here."  
Men hurry by and soon a moan falls on the listening ear,  
"Somebody hit," you merely think and no one stops at all,  
Because out here one soon gets used to seeing comrades fall.

Inside the dug-out, damp and foul, a candle's flickering light  
Shows sleeping forms oblivious of the ever ceaseless fight;  
Their pillow just a haversack, their bed is only mud:  
Maybe a cast-off overcoat, damp with a comrade's blood.

Day after day, night after night, the same grim wearing strife:  
Men come and go - some stay; those who for right gave up their life:  
For yes, we know the right is ours, our cause is just and true,  
And so we care not what we hear or what we have to do.

No matter what our task may be, what sacrifice we make  
For Honour, our Religion and our Liberty's at stake.  
Our comrades too, both dead and maimed, also demand that we  
Fight on until the very end, to Death or Victory.

Private Robert E. Bradshaw  
16th Canadian Scottish Battalion

Killed at Vimy Ridge: April 9th, 1917.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jun 20, 2016 2:53 pm**

Most certainly one of the CA40 lads! His file has the same information copied from so many others.  
Some day we will find where they are buried.



1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAME
43945	Private	BRADSHAW	Robert Edward
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. CHURCH
16th Battalion	9-4-17	649-B-10439	Church
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
"Killed in Action"			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
VIMY			
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	
<i>Nine Elms Hill Cem</i> <i>M. Sin + 6 above rocks</i>		Grave ..... Plot ..... Row .....	
15. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	16. EXPOSURE NO.	17. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLEMENT	
18. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

## 18. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

$\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles North of Arras, France. (Grave Registered)

## 19. REMARKS

Approx. Location, Sheet 51b.A.10.c.9.7.

FORM E11 1054-10M-19-11-16		E-12. 4963	
NUMBER 43045	RANK Pte	NAME BRADSHAW R.E.	649-B-10439
UNIT 16th Bn	NEXT-OF-KIN Mrs. Gahnde Weelie 131. Lansdowne Ave Toronto.		
FILE NO. R.L. 25-B-3610			
DATE OF DEATH 9-4-17		CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH KILLED IN ACTION	CAS. SHEET No A.636
DATE OF BURIAL		PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
B.R. by G.R.C. Memorial Cross. Nine Elms Mt Cew. Shelus 3 Miles N of Anas. N.R. 21165-A. Memorial Plot.		Grave No. C.A. 40- Location A.10.c. 9.7. Site A.10.c. 9.7. Burial Report by G.R.C. 1/2 mile S.E. of Anas. S.E. of Anas. 3 3/4 miles N. of Anas.	Authority on R.L. 26. 7a. Vol 14 BR/2249/OGR. BR/2497 OGR.

**VIMY  
MEMORIAL**

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jul 05, 2016 11:44 am**

Norm's recent update clarifies *our* misunderstanding of his numbers...

Forty-one men were identified when buried in crater CA40 on the battlefield after the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917. But at least three men, perhaps more, were unidentified when buried with the others.

$$41 + 3 = 44$$

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 05, 2016 8:52 pm**

I found the link:

<https://fundrazr.com/stories/4ALLR6>

But I do not yet understand what it means?

Details?

If you go back to the site and the story it falls apart here: (the text in purple is mine)

<https://fundrazr.com/4zeCb>

**Norm Christie wrote:**

On April 9, 1917 the Canadian Corps, 100,000 strong, attacked the German stronghold of Vimy Ridge. The Canadians drove the enemy from the Ridge and achieved the impossible. But the losses were heavy; 10,000 casualties, including 3600 dead.

In the face of withering machine gun fire, manoeuvring between the massive mine craters that lined (were interspersed in) No Man's Land, the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, attacked, capturing all their objectives. 100 of the 600 men were either killed or later died of wounds.

Canadian burial squads (does he mean 13th Battalion) followed the attack, burying the dead in temporary battlefield cemeteries, including mine craters (that is a supposition - never reported factually). 44 of the dead of the Canadian Scottish were buried in a mine crater (supposition not fact) in No Man's Land, designated CA40. (the coordinates for CA40, if true are a trench not a mine crater)

After the war, exhumation squads exhumed 1000s of isolated graves, bringing them into permanent war graves cemeteries. CA40 was designated to be exhumed and moved to Nine Elms (that also is supposition - not factually reported), but there is no evidence (not true - there are many UCS in Nine Elms) of any of the men from CA40 there.

Searching all the likely cemeteries in the Vimy region also revealed no evidence of the Canadian Scottish graves (again not true - we do not know which battalions the UCS originated from).

Military historian Norm Christie believes they remain where they were originally buried on the Vimy battlefield in 1917.

Norm could have said "this is what I believed happened" and that would have been fine. To infer that all these statements are factual is absolutely incorrect and misleading to those that are being enticed to fund the campaign. I believe he is doing this from his heart and with all the best intentions but the project is clouded by past experience with the CWGC. That too I understand but that has to be kept personal.

All evidence shows that even if there was a CA40 and the men were there, it is NOT a mine crater. There is also no evidence that the men are not in Nine Elms or any of the other cemeteries.

These are my opinions and mine alone. File it with the 2nd Lieutenant Jack Kipling story as another great mistake. I have probably made many more mistakes than Norm but sometimes you just have to say "WOOPS"! Thanks to the group here many of my mistakes were caught early in the process. Peer review is not only critical it is essential.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Wed Jul 06, 2016 12:07 am**

I don't feel this is the proper procedure to publicly debate Christie's findings, nor do I think you are in a position to suggest how he should have written something. You have done your own investigation and have come up with your conclusions. Norm has done the his. For you, and members of this forum, to continually undermine him in public is not only inexcusable, it's unprofessional.



If you are not willing to help fund his expedition, so be it, but to railroad his attempt by stating your theories, in public, is so wrong. At least he has boots on the ground making an attempt. What have you done? You have continually questioned his work, his findings, and the fact he does not want to public debate you. That's beyond disrespectful.

The forum had an opportunity to work hand-in-hand with Christie, but instead you chose to do your own investigation and publicly call out Christie. That is so wrong.

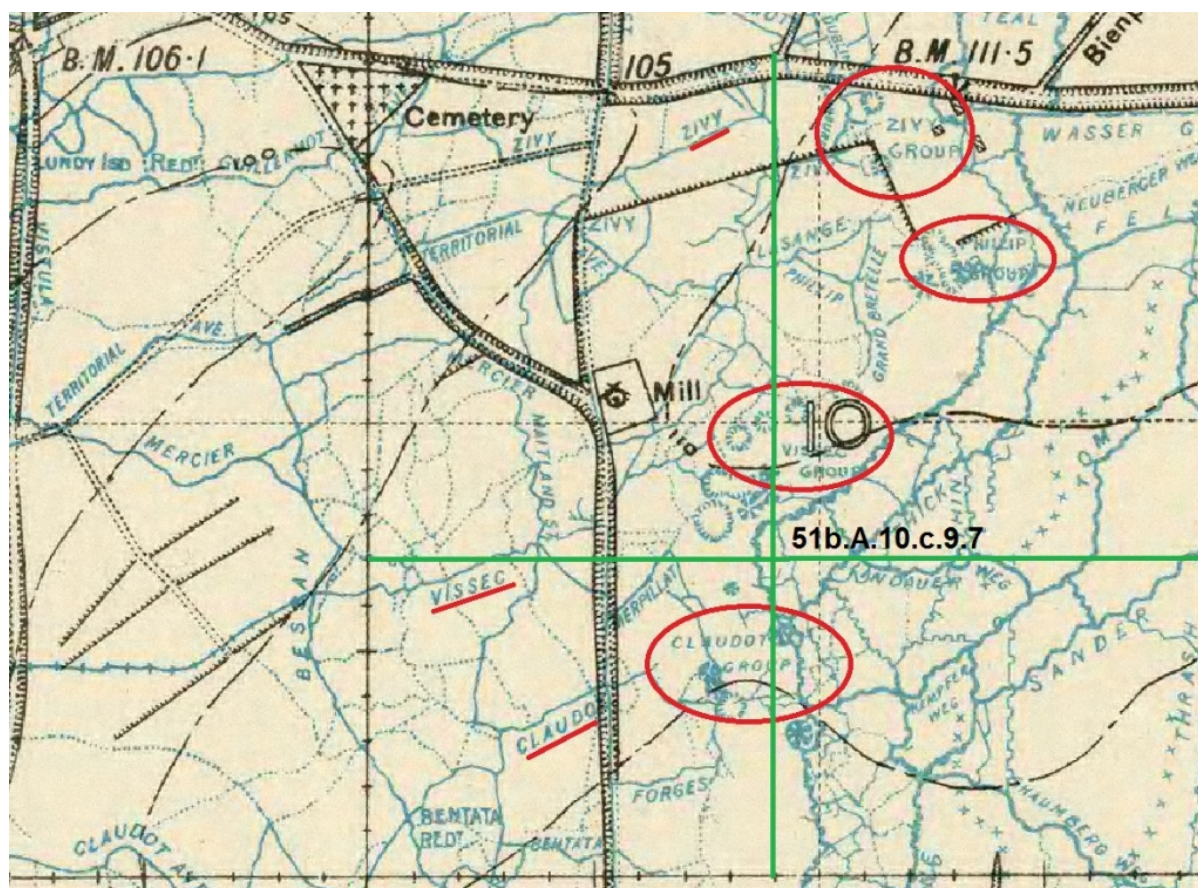
Please do not send me a PM, as you have in the past. I do not read them.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jul 06, 2016 7:13 am**

The proposed site of CA40 is as I understand at trench map coordinates 51b.A.10.c.9.7, at a trench line (green cross hairs) in amongst an interspersed groups of craters that are circled.



The CWGC do not report that location for CA40, nor do they mention a mine crater. They do report that the cemetery was exhumed and moved to Nine Elms. So far we have not been able to prove where CA40 was by the CWGC coordinates, nor could we prove that their statement was incorrect.

### **CWGC wrote:**

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

There are 67 of a total of 97 UCS (Unknown Canadian Soldiers) in the Nine Elms Cemetery that we can not definitely say are not members of the 16th Infantry Battalion:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Canadian	Total	Unknown	Known		Total	Total	Unknown	Known		Notes
2	1	12	1	11		Alias	2	0	2		<a href="#">updated with COG-BR information on Apr</a>
3	2	2	1	1		French	11	0	11		1.C.19 not 14th now UCS
4	3	7	1	6		British	151	46	105		1.C.20 not 14th as patch shows 1st Bn.
5	4	5	3	2		Canadians	527	97	430		1.D.40 GRRF changed to read UBS and COG
6	5	73	3	70		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>548</b>		1.D.16 & 1.D.17 could be UCS, not a UBS ar
7	7	12	0	12							1.G.17 probably UCS not UBS in that area
8	10	45	2	43		Spreadsheet	691				1.G.17 probably UCS not UBS in that area
9	13	3	0	3		Difference	0				1.E.8,9,10 probably UCS as not UBS in that
10	14	80	6	74							3.D.11 changed to Canadian Infantry 9th M
11	15	77	2	75							1.G.19 probably Canadian as COG-BR does
12	16	20	4	16							
13	18	10	0	10							
14	19	4	0	4							
15	20	2	0	2							
16	21	16	1	15							
17	22	3	1	2							
18	24	6	0	6							
19	25	6	0	6							
20	26	11	3	8							
21	27	4	0	4							
22	28	5	1	4							
23	29	8	0	8							
24	31	1	0	1							
25	42	1	0	1							
26	60	6	0	6							
27	1st CMR	25	0	25							
28	Can Sig. Corp.	1	0	1							
29	CFA	2	0	2							
30	CMGC	11	1	10							
31	CMMGS	1	0	1							
32	PPCLI	1	0	1							
33	No Unit	67	67	0							
34	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>430</b>							

The missing men were all examined:

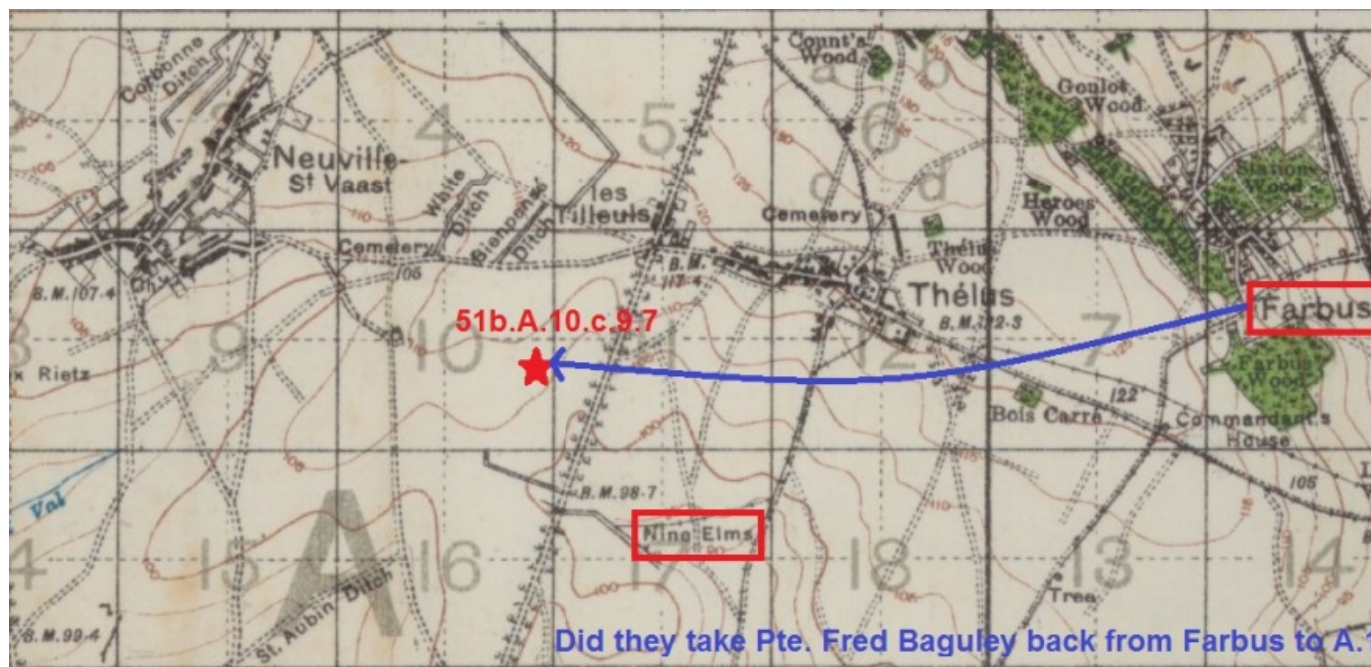


	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	surname	#	rank	Cross 9	CA40	Details
2	ADAMOVICH	'736633'	Pte.			NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge in A10 to A.11.b and d
3	ALLEN	'420819'	Pte.	x	x	KIA Farbus Woods: Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
4	ARMITAGE	'625286'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
5	ATTWOOD	'736569'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 - grave not located
6	BAGULEY	'718192'	Pte.	x	x	KIA FARBUS but reported at A.10.c.9.7 site
7	BALL	'700410'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
8	BETHEL	'719115'	Pte.			NRB: MIA then KIA
9	BETTS	'736746'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
10	BLAIK	'736108'	Pte.	x	x	KIA at Objective: but reported in CA40 as well ??
11	BONIVER	'871504'	Pte.	x	x	Nine Elms and A.10 listed - maybe just reference to Mem. Cross?
12	BRADSHAW	'43945'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.636)
13	BROWN	'718661'	Pte.	x	x	Clearer note - "Memorial No. 9 to above and others" as on many
14	CHANDLER	'28823'	L.Cpl.	x	x	"Memorial No. 9 to above and others" - says does not mark grave
15	CLEMONS	'721564'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
16	COOK	'872090'	Pte.	x		KIA and Vimy Memorial
17	COWPER	'420717'	Cpl.			NRB: MIA then KIA (A.36 #10177)
18	CURLEY	'258460'	Pte.	x		NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge
19	DICKSON	'160168'	Pte.	x	x	KIA instant shell fire - CA40 listing as others
20	GIBBONS	'624801'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 listing as others
21	GLASSFORD	'722078'	Pte.	x	x	Registered 51b.A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.637 #17557)
22	GOODING	'736317'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a not 51b.
23	GORRIE	'718755'	Pte.	x		NRB: Attack on Vimy Ridge - machine gun fire
24	HALLIDAY	'624957'	Pte.	x		NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
25	HAMILTON	'A/20408'	Sgt.	x	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a not 51b.
26	HARPER	'722256'	Pte.			NRB: attack near Vimy (A.645 Sh. 1 #20047)
27	HAWKINS	'736103'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
28	HENDERSON	'105644'	Pte.	x		NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
29	HOOPER	'736880'	Pte.	x	x	At Vimy Ridge 44a.A10.c.9.7 Grave No. C.A.40 (A.657 #????)
30	HOWIE	'628188'	L.Cpl.	x	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
31	KILCUP	'832135'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
32	KIRBY	'718249'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
33	LATIMER	'426344'	L.Cpl.	x		Buried near where he fell in "No Man's Land" (A.637 #20544)
34	LAYCOCK	'70022'	L.Cpl.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 (A.652 #26803)
35	LEITCH	'736651'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 at jump off
36	MANNING	'718699'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
37	MILNE, V.C.	'427586'	Pte.	x	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (A.638 #33868)
38	McCANDLESS	'736171'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected to 51b

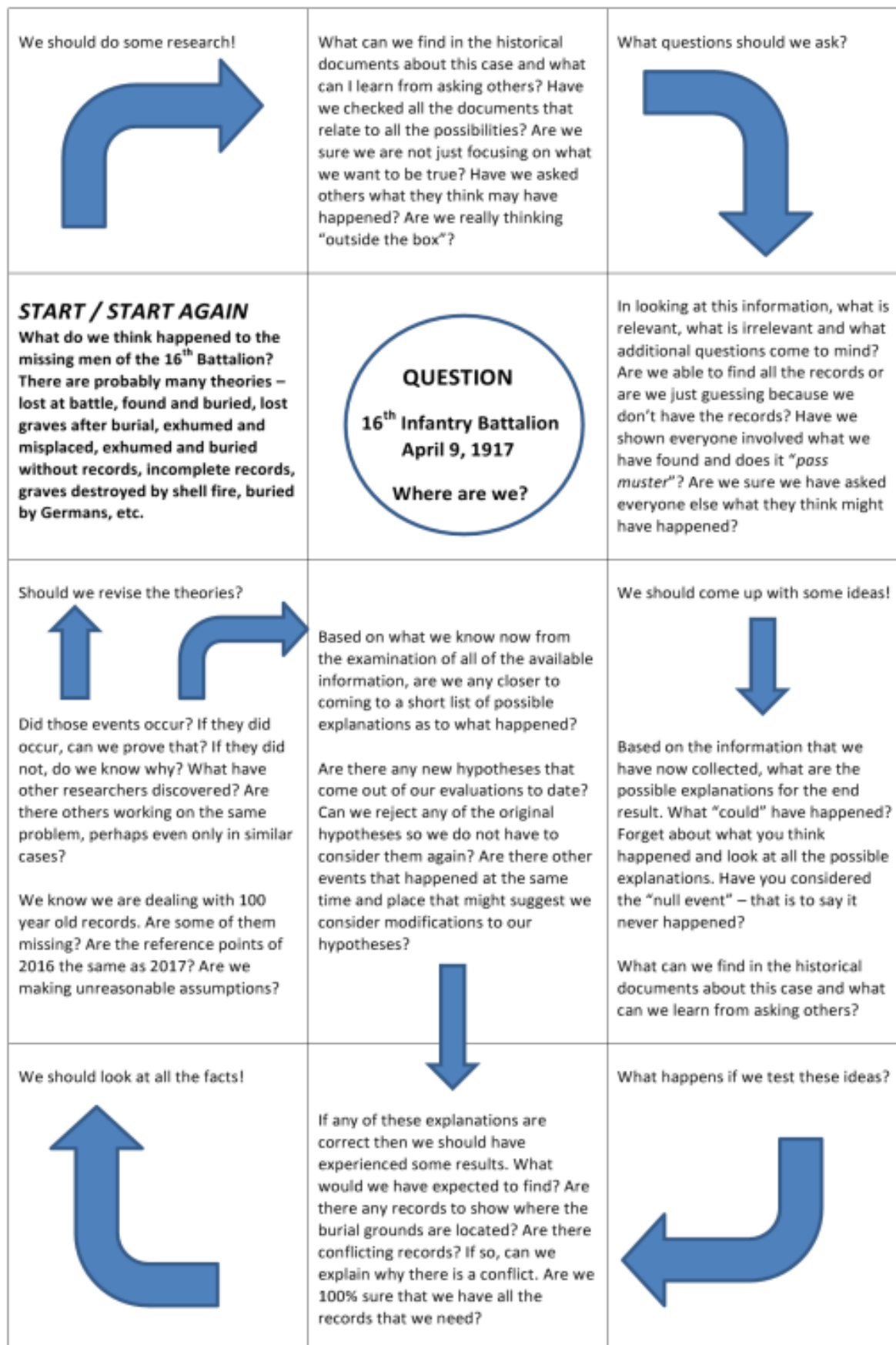


39	McCOWAN	'420765'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected to 51b from attack southwest of Vimy
40	McKAY	'736402'	Pte.			NRB: attack at Vimy Ridge (A.643 #30677)
41	McPHAIL	'426601'	L.Cpl.			NRB: attack southeast of Neuville St.Vaast (A.636 A.664 #31637)
42	McWILLIAMS	'718526'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
43	OWEN	'859684'	Pte.	x		Attack west of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.637 #36966)
44	PARSONS	'624593'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
45	PATTISON	'718269'	Pte.	x	x	KIA at jump-off location: Corrected to 51b.A10.c.9.7
46	PHILLIPS	'105741'	Pte.	x	x	KIA; west of Thelus corrected to 51b.A10.c.9.7
47	PIPER	'736967'	Pte.	x	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.639 #38619)
48	POWELL	'737084'	Pte.	x	x	KIA: 51b.A10.c.9.7
49	PURNELL	'700967'	Pte.	x	x	KIA SE NSV 51b.A10.c.9.7
50	RUDDOCK	'129200'	Pte.	x	x	36c.A10.c.9.7 - later corrected to 51b
51	SIMMONDS	'736075'	Pte.			NRB: (A.636 #43642)
52	SIMMONS	'77309'	Sgt.	x	x	KIA: Neuville St.Vaast - Corrected to 51b.A10.c.9.7
53	SNELGROVE	'624477'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
54	SPALDING	'874370'	Pte.	x		NRB: KIA
55	STRICKLER	'625303'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
56	TALLMAN	'859301'	Pte.			NRB: MIA then KIA (A81 #46831)
57	TARLTON	'129336'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
58	WILLERTON	'719161'	Pte.	x	x	36c.A10.c.9.7 - photo of cross sent to family Vancouver, B.C.
59	COUNT	57		49	41	

Perhaps my approach to this investigation was flawed. If it was, I can accept that, but remember this all started because I was asked by POTENTIAL INVESTORS to check out the story and see if it held muster. We wanted to find Fred Baguley and we wanted to invest and find the remains.



I wish we could have proven the CA40 theory, as proposed, was correct. To the best of my knowledge, all of the information is in the public domain to be openly reviewed, critiqued and reported. Anything that I say or write cannot be inferred to be the words of other members of the CEFSG. These are my opinions and mine alone.



If any member does not wish to receive these posts they can "Opt Out" by going to this page:

[ucp.php?i=zebra&mode=foes](http://ucp.php?i=zebra&mode=foes)





# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 13 of 30

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jul 06, 2016 8:38 am**



@Robyn

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Wed Jul 06, 2016 9:05 am**

*rlaughton wrote:*

If any member does not wish to receive these posts they can "Opt Out" by going to this page:  
[ucp.php?i=zebra&mode=foes](http://ucp.php?i=zebra&mode=foes)

This is like the ignore feature on other forums. Nice one!

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jul 06, 2016 4:21 pm**

I am not picking sides with respect to Robyn's post but public debate is the hallmark of any democracy. I have followed this post and have added the occasional comment. I think contributions have been professional with the only intent on finding the bodies of the missing men, not on destroying one man's mission. We all wish Norm the best in his efforts and hope that he does find the bodies. However, when you are asking for public help and support you open yourself up to evaluation and discussion.

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 07, 2016 3:11 pm**

Thanks for your post Brad as I agree that this is not a place to "take sides". I posted my thoughts and Robyn has every right to post in reply. Unfortunately it distracts from the important issue of finding the men of the 16th Battalion.

I have only two problems with the Robyn post and I am 100% behind him/her making this post as that is what social media is all about. If you post it, be prepared to be examined, critiqued or whatever. If you don't want to face it, don't post it! All of Norm's posts are public, as are mine, and we are both open to public comment. So my issues with this post by him/her are these:

1. For you, and members of this forum, to continually undermine him in public is not only inexcusable, it's unprofessional.

That is wrong as this was MY POST and it does not have anything to do with any other member of the CEFSG. If you don't like what I say, that is fine - critique me all you want but DO NOT blame others that had NOTHING to do with my post.

2. The forum had an opportunity to work hand-in-hand with Christie, but instead you chose to do your own investigation and publicly call out Christie. That is so wrong.

That statement is so far from the truth it is incomprehensible. I would suggest that in the

alternative that many of us are strong supporters of Norm's work and have purchased his books and DVDs. I myself, and many others have written, that we tried to involve Norm in our projects and he has declined. Most certainly he is welcome to enter into these discussions here at any time.

The real problem here is that funds are being solicited from the public and not everyone has access to the research to make the decision as to whether this is a valid project. In this particular case, I became involved to examine this project on behalf of potential investors. I found some issues and those have not been addressed by Norm Christie. In fact they are not even mentioned. Norm could very easily say that he has seen what has appeared in the peer reviews and he has the answers - then provide the answer. That would be a simple process.

Here are three simple questions that perhaps Norm might wish to answer to start the process of open discussion:

1. Why was the body of Private Fred Baguley (my interest in this case) taken from Farbus at **51b.B. 8** back to a mine crater (see below) some 4,000 yards to the west in **51b.A.10**?
2. Why is it professed that **51b.A.10.c.9.7** is a mine crater when it is clearly a trench?
3. Why have the coordinates of the CWGC been ignored in the Christie search for CA40 as they clearly state *"GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917."*

My thanks to all of those that have recently reviewed this case and supported the decision to make this information public. For those that do not want to read the posts or participate in these discussions, please see the prior post that details how to "Opt Out".

I believe that we will eventually find the lost men of the 16th Battalion. I am still open to the thought that they, and the lost men of the 15th Battalion, may be in the Nine Elms Cemetery. The simple fact is that there is no proof that they are not there, so it is a real possibility, one that was ignored in the video. The research conducted to date has shown that if the CWGC coordinates are correct that there are some reasonable options for where CA40 is located. Brad's work on defining the rail lines was critical to that determination. Ted's work on marking the movement of the troops falls closely in line with Brad's analysis.

Let us put aside our differences. If you agree with the case, join in the discussion, participate in the research and make your opinions known. If you disagree with the case, join in the discussion, participate in the research and make your opinions known. That is how the system works.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robyn**

Posted: **Thu Jul 07, 2016 10:12 pm**

### **vimyboy wrote:**

I am not picking sides with respect to Robyn's post but public debate is the hallmark of any democracy. I have followed this post and have added the occasional comment. I think contributions have been professional with the only intent on finding the bodies of the missing men, not on destroying one man's mission. We all wish Norm the best in his efforts and hope that he does find the bodies. However, when you are asking for public help and support you open yourself up to evaluation and discussion.

Public debate can also get very close to defamation of character and libel, as well. Public comment is one thing, but to character assassinate is something egotistical, insecure people do. To advise against Norm's fundraising is just plain unprofessional. I firmly believe in a healthy debating, but until those men are found no one will know who is correct. As far as I know, Ted has been the only one to make a concerted effort to view the area and analyse what he's found. Now that's a true investigator. Fancy paperwork and charts will only take you so far.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Neil Burns**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 7:27 am**

*robyn wrote:*

Public debate can also get very close to defamation of character and libel, as well. Public comment is one thing, but to character assassinate is something egotistical, insecure people do. To advise against Norm's fundraising is just plain unprofessional. I firmly believe in a healthy debating, but until those men are found no one will know who is correct. As far as I know, Ted has been the only one to make a concerted effort to view the area and analyse what he's found. Now that's a true investigator. Fancy paperwork and charts will only take you so far.

Hi,

I don't think there is an individual on this forum that doesn't respect Norm Christie and his work. His books are a valuable portion to all of our libraries.

Richard is relying on the CWGC reports which tell us what areas soldiers were disinterred from, they are the natural starting point for any investigation like this.

Fancy paperwork and charts are the underlying data for most of our conclusions about the past.

Thank you,

Neil

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 9:17 am**

Robyn, can you please provide the quotes from this forum that back up your comments of "defamation of character and libel" and "character assassination?" I will be the first to apologize if I have crossed the line. I have the greatest respect for Norm and offered to help fund this project before he went to Fundrazr.

You are very passionate about this subject and I would love to hear your analysis on the evidence presented by both Norm Christie and this forum. We are always looking for people to evaluate our evidence and provide a counterpoint.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 9:31 am**

@Jason - jbradshaw

Hi Jason

Have you discovered your Inbox/Outbox for messages yet? On the login page, top left, there is a notification for "new messages." I believe you'll find a few messages in your Inbox.

Cheers, Ted

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 9:47 am**

**I will be second.** Problem is there is nothing to apologize for as nobody has crossed the line. It is important that the line not be crossed during the process of accusing someone of defamation (*aka character assassination*) and libel. Facts and opinion are not subject to defamation if they are true. Probably one of the most famous cases of that was none other than General Sir Arthur Currie. He sued the newspaper, proving the claims were not factual as they related to the "Pursuit to Mons" for \$50,000



and netted a \$500 award.

I would suggest to our Chairman that once Robyn has provided the quotes requested by VimyBoy that any posts that are not related to the investigation at CA40 (including this one) be removed from this topic, failing which the topic should be locked and placed in the Administrators Vault.

That is my opinion and mine alone.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 2:58 pm**

This was the latest report that was sent to the CWGC on March 1, 2016. I have no knowledge of an answer from the CWGC but it is quite possible that I have forgotten. I recall that we told them that we were not asking for any action on their part and that the report was for information only.

Shortly after this submission I started on a detailed report on the investigation that we hoped to submit by April 9, 2016. That event did not occur as the report, following the trend of our Ottawa Parliament, *died on the Order Table*. As it has been some time now, I will go back and dig out that report and put it back into circulation. It is probably good that it lay dormant for a while, as now I can go back and read it from the start with fresh eyes.

Since that time Ted has also been back to the site and I believe he spoke with the CWGC directly. I will leave it to Ted to update the membership on those discussions. I was seeking assistance from Alain on the *French Connection* for the local work and I will need to touch base and see what transpired. There was the message posted by transparentearth regarding the I-beam under any headstones that certainly raised concern for any work within a cemetery. I have yet to check with the CWGC on that issue but I will do that now.

I took a quick look at the draft report of March 15, 1916 and there are five (5) references to the work of Norm Christie. I do not believe any of them are derogatory or defamatory although they do present alternative hypotheses or pose additional questions. Given the current discussion I will do my best to make sure that any comments regarding the work of others is written in an acceptable professional manner.

There are eight (8) members of the reporting team and nothing has been published and sent to the CWGC without the approval of all members.

Richard

***ejwalshe wrote:***

**Report to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

March 1, 2016: The Location of CA40 Burial Site, Thelus, France

For more than a year, a Research Team at the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group has been undertaking an examination of available records to identify the most probable location of the First World War burial site known as CA 40 ("*C*" for "*Canadian*", "*A*" for "*1st Division*" and "*40*" the "*numerical identifier*"). This is our report on those findings.

The CWGC reference to the burial ground is contained in the documentation for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus:

***CWGC wrote:***

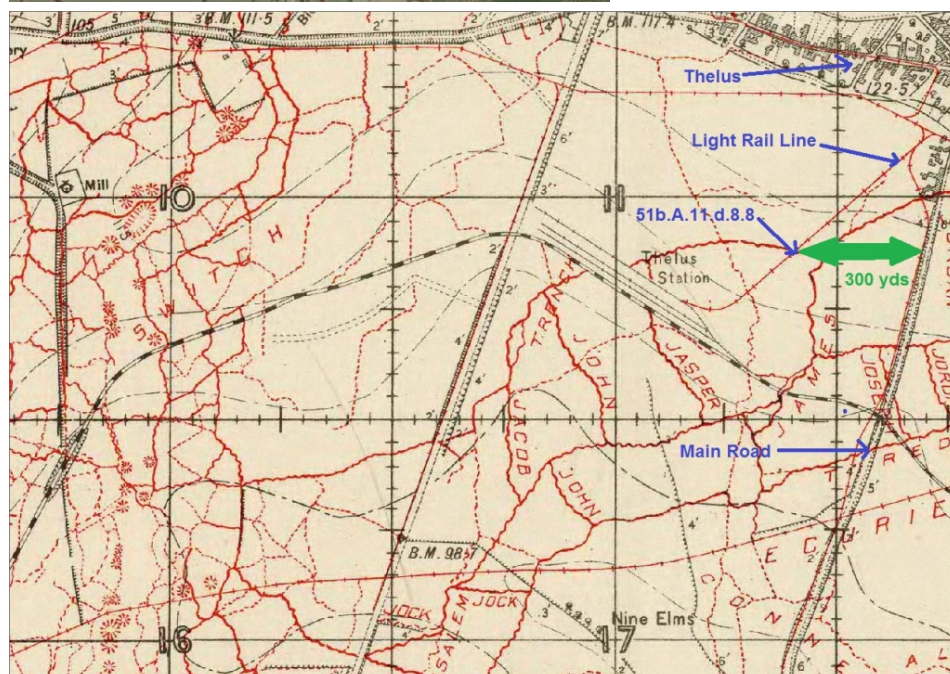
GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

Our investigation agrees completely with this description, which we understand was initially provided by the British First Army to the Imperial War Graves Commission during the period in which graves were being concentrated in May of 1919.

The tools we used to undertake our research into the true location of the CA 40 burial sited consisted of:

1. *Circumstances of Death* and *E-13 War Graves Registers* for Canadian soldiers buried in CA 40 and other temporary burial sites in the Thelus area.
2. *Graves Registration Report Forms* (GRRF) and *Concentration of Graves Exhumations and Re-Burials Burial Returns* (COG-BR) for the concentration cemeteries in the area where Canadian remains were buried.
3. War Diaries of the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Vimy in April 1917 at the Division, Brigade and Battalion level.
4. 1:40,000 scale area trench maps from the Lloyd Reeds Collection at McMaster University, Hamilton Canada.
5. 1:10,000 scale trench maps from the Imperial War Museum contained in the DVD set "The National Archives British Trench Map Atlas DVD 1".
6. On-line aerial photographs from the area south of Thelus as available for Sector A of Trench Map 51b.
7. Photographs of burial sites in the Vimy sector in the Spring of 1917, from the collection at Library and Archives Canada.
8. Google Earth overlays of the area using a combination of 1917 trench maps and aerial photographs to identify the key features of the area.
9. Photographs of battalion burial sites in the Vimy sector in Spring of 1917, from the collection of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project.
10. Information on the location of subways, tunnels and craters in the Thelus sector in Spring of 1917, provided by the DURAND GROUP.
11. On-site inspection of the area by the Project Director of the CEFSG Research Team undertaking this investigation.

On the basis of the work undertaken to date, we are able to clearly identify a site where the CWGC defines the location as 274 metres (300 yards) west of the main road by the light railway track. Using the Google Earth overlay process, the team was able to accurately identify the location at 51b.A.11.d.8.8 (GPS Coordinates 50.3513, 2.7958 or 50°21'4.68"N 2°47'44.88"E). The area is shown in the attached image as a partially filled in trench at the junction of the light rail line and the 274-metre mark from the road:



The CEFSG Project Director will return to the site in April 2016 and confirm the location of the site and discuss options to gain access to the site for examination of the surface geotechnical conditions. We anticipate the most appropriate next step is a surface level examination of the sub-surface geotechnical characteristics using non-intrusive instruments such as GPR (*Ground Penetrating Radar*) and/or EM Survey (*Electromagnetic*). Prior to deciding on the best approach, it is essential to discuss the local soil conditions in the area with geotechnical experts in France who are intimately familiar with the area. The historic displacement of the soil from the war and the local chalk strata may have a significant impact on the study conditions.

We can provide additional details on our investigation to date, and would be pleased to meet with CWGC representatives at the site during the Project Director's visit in April 2016.

#### Project Reporting Team:

- Project Director: Edward J. Walshe, Jr. Eng. - Pointe-Claire, Quebec
- Richard V. Laughton, B.Sc., M.Eng, C.Chem., QEPe - Milton, Ontario



- Bradley Armstrong, B.Com., C.A. - Vancouver, British Columbia

**Project Reviewers, Researchers & Contributors:**

- Brigadier-General (Ret'd) Greg Young, OMM, MSM, CD - Mississauga, Ontario
- Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd) Roman Jarmowycz, OMM, CD, Ph.D. - Beaconsfield, Quebec
- Marika I. Pirie, B.A., B.Ed, M.A. - Calgary, Alberta
- Corinne MacLellan, B.A. - Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Ian Ogilvie, CSO-OFA2 - Vancouver, British Columbia

**EDIT: Submitted to the CWGC - Maidenhead on March 1, 2016**

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jul 08, 2016 4:24 pm**

Richard,

I will be following up with a report to CWGC Maidenhead while copying our friends at CWGC Arras.

The latest draft of the report, probably from 15 March 2016 (as you mentioned), and uploaded at MediaFire is seriously out-of-date at the moment.

The final report will be quite succinct - we have come to only one conclusion, and that is we have identified where the description of CA40 was, matching the description at the CWGC Nine Elms Military website.

You may recall we had asked CWGC if they could verify the coordinates of the description, and they replied they could not match the description to any known location - well, we have accomplished that!

I could not have done this on my own, and many of you helped so much. A big tip of my hat to Brad, for his observations made me open my eyes, revisit my mistakes, and find the light rail.

Everything and anything else in any of the drafts of this report is pure conjecture...albeit, some of it is pretty good conjecture!

We do not know if the men are still there.

We do not know if the men were exhumed from this location.

We do not know where the men were exhumed to.

Many, many things we do not know...I know it is frustrating after all this research done by so many contributors. We came so close to uncovering the truth. But, we will have contributed to the cause in a positive fashion, and perhaps our small discovery will lead others to close this case once and for all.

Thanks again to everyone - do not underestimate your contributions!

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 09, 2016 8:45 am**

I was able to track down my original version of the report on: (PDF Download)

## "Vimy 1917 - CA40 and the 16th Battalion Canadian Scottish"

I started this in February after we did the short preliminary report that was submitted to the CWGC. There may be versions after this where I had inserted more information but this generally gives the idea as to where I was heading at the time. A great deal of the information is from the many posts of others in the group so this is not my personal report. Anyone that does not want their information used can say "take it out".

You can search the document for "Norm Christie" if you want to check on anything I wrote about Norm's theories, as well as the information used from his books.

I have no idea what I will do with this report in the end but I do intend to finish it so I have all the information assembled in one place.

This now differs from the report that Ted is writing.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **robbyn**

Posted: **Sat Jul 09, 2016 2:06 pm**

Here is my reply and final post on the subject:

Firstly, I am extremely passionate about finding these men and everything First World War. I have spent numerous years travelling the battlefields researching topics that I find interesting, so yes, passionate is the correct choice of words. Sometimes that passion comes out in my writings. Re-read my post, at no time, did I say anyone was committing libel.

Public comment and debate is a good thing and I wholeheartedly support it. My comment concerning members undermining Norm Christie was not in reference to the fact this group has come up with different results, it's comments that publicly question his intentions and methods. Slicing and dicing his comments and making statement like, "To infer that all these statements are factual is absolutely incorrect and misleading to those that are being enticed to fund the campaign. I believe he is doing this from his heart and with all the best intentions but the project is clouded by past experience with the CWGC. That too I understand but that has to be kept personal." is uncalled for. How does anyone know his employment with CWGC is clouding his past? These are not comments one makes when doing a peer review.

Also, "...public debate is the hallmark of any democracy" yet comments like "any posts that are not related to the investigation at CA40 (including this one) be removed from this topic" is NOT democracy; it's censorship.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 09, 2016 5:05 pm**

How does anyone know his employment with CWGC is clouding his past?

It is in his book(s).

Anyway, thank you for your comments and best of luck with your research. There was no intent at censorship it is just that the Forum Administrators, of which Peter takes command of content, are very strict on this issue. The last thing any of us want is to detract from the important work that is being done.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

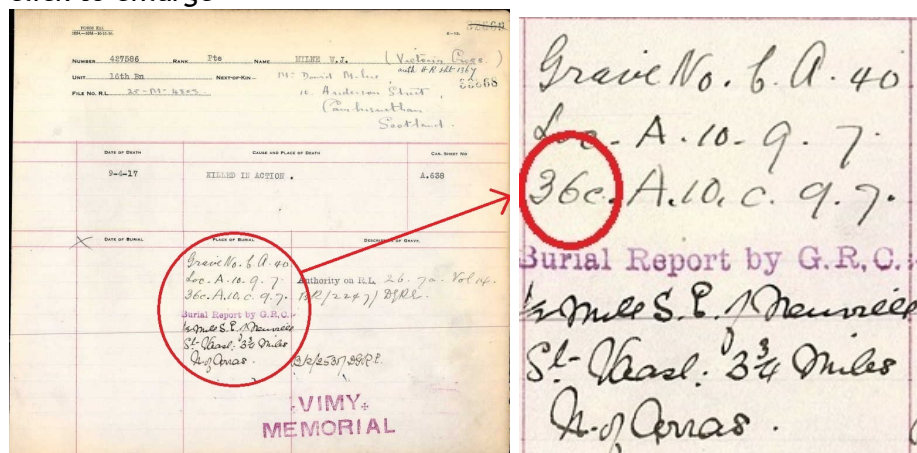
by **rlaughton**Posted: **Mon Jul 11, 2016 7:11 am**

### What if?

I was answering some questions about Lts. McDonald and Wylie (the 15th Battalion men located) as it related to the case of 2nd Lts. Law and Kipling (the Irish Guards). These four cases are intricately related as they involve the errors in the recording of the trench map details by the 18th Labour Company at the time of concentration. This matter was resolved in October 2015 when it was discovered that Private McPherson was also incorrectly placed, yet we knew from his COD exactly where he was buried. The CWGC accepted the report on that error.

In that case the 18th Labour Company placed the men 1,000 yards to the west when they inadvertently placed them in **36c.G.25.c.6.8** instead of a **36c.H.25.c.6.8**. That rang the bell, as if you recall, many of the files for the men of the 16th Battalion incorrectly reported a burial location at **36c.A.10.c.9.7** when they meant to say **51b.A.10.c.9.7**, a completely different map. That error was copied over-and-over again from file to file. That is clearly shown on an example for Private Milne, V.C. who was KIA that day:

*click to enlarge*



So what if that was not the only mistake? What if the grid sector was also wrong, not just the map number, and they made the same mistake they made with the Canadian and British Lieutenants? Is it possible that the real location was 1,000 yards to the east at **51b.A.11.c.9.7**? Have a look, that puts them beside the rail line that goes into the Thelus Station.

Remember what the CWGC page for Nine Elms Military Cemetery says:

**GRAVE CA 40, THELUS**, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

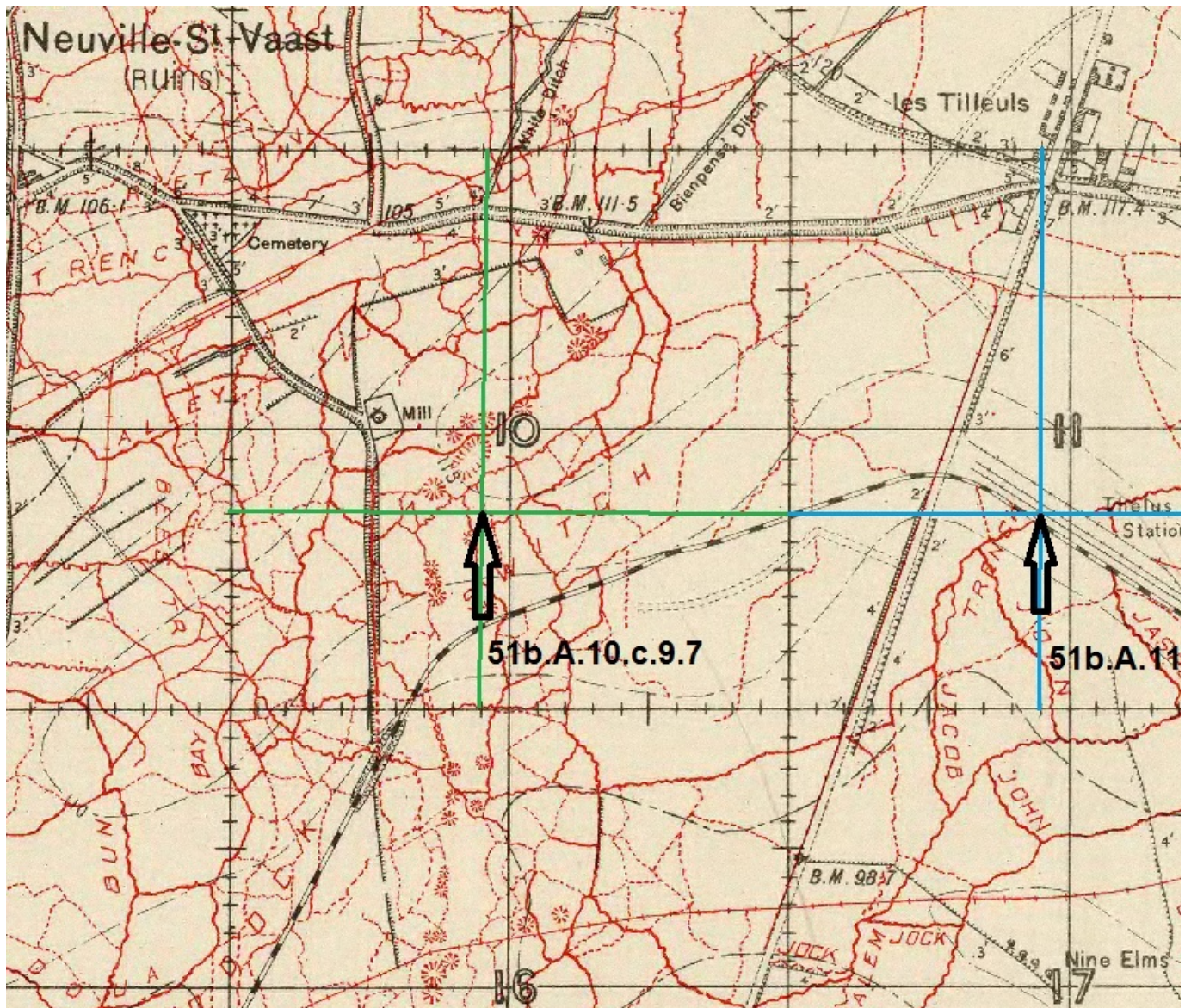
The questions that remain from this alternative then are:

- Was there a light railway track at the Vimy Station area in April 1917 or thereafter when the burials took place? We know that the light railway comes into the station (see map below) from the site previously reported to the CWGC (this post) at **51b.A.11.d.8.8**. We also know from the 3rd Brigade War Diary (see this post) that one of the proposed burial grounds was to be on the east side of the Lille-Arras Road, which goes right through the middle of Sector **51b.A.11.c** at the rail line.
- Is it possible that the CWGC erred when they said that the burial ground was to the **West** of the main road, given that the above information places it to the **East** of the main road? We previously examined all the areas where the railway cut through to the West of the main road (see this post and others) which did not present a reasonable solution. Unfortunately the CWGC does not know



the origin of the statement that describes the location of the CA40 burial ground and they too suspect it may be incorrect.

This then could be an alternate location, if the 18th Labour Company error was more than just the map number. I am not suggesting that this is a change in the current location suggested to the CWGC, it is just another idea - we have to keep an open mind now that we know of the many errors that were made.



*Just for the record, I did check to make sure there was not a light rail line to the west of the Lille-Arras Road on Map 36c in either A.10 or A.11.*

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

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## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 14 of 30

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Jul 11, 2016 7:59 am**

Neither location (51b.a.10.c.9.7, 51b.a.11.c.9.7) fits the description, specifically, 300 yards (274 meters) west of the main road, AND by a light rail.

We still have been unable to draw any conclusions from the original coordinates (36c.A.10.c.9.7), which we know are too far from the battlefield of the 16th Btn.

Also, we discounted any sheet referring to A.10.c.9.7.

Once again, leaving us with no rhyme nor reason as to where 36c.A.10.c.9.7 came from. Without a doubt, the most frustrating issue in this case.

But, 51b.A.11.d.8.8 is still the most compelling location for what was CA40.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jul 18, 2016 7:24 am**

Ted:

I was checking on something for the 14th Battalion and then I remembered one of your early posts where you marked the area where the burial ground was to be west of the Main Road (that is the one through Les Tilleuls from Arras to Lens) and east of the Eisner Kreuz.

I had not noticed that the Eisner Kreuz was in two parts and it also extends from Sector 16.b down into Sector 16.d as shown on here:

<http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan ... po%3A69396>

At the time you first posted that information, Brad had not identified the light railway locations. One of those locations at the 274 metre mark is on the light railway at about 51b.16.b.30.25, about midway between the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and the Arras Road Cemetery. We had that marked on a Google Earth Overlay as a candidate site but I never linked it to your earlier 14th Battalion location. If the 274m mark is not precisely correct, there is a spot where the Eisner Kreuz intersects the light rail line.

If I recall correctly, CA3 was in that area.

EDIT:

These are the original war diary pages for the 14th Battalion with that description -

<http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e044/e001090630.jpg>

<http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e044/e001090631.jpg>

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Jul 18, 2016 8:26 am**

Hey Richard

Interesting location with all the requirements to match the CWGC description of CA40, but unfortunately well south of the 16th battlefield area.

It still has me thinking is it possible the men were moved that far south anyway? We're talking more than 500 yards here.

And the rail would have been convenient to move them laterally...but *why* move them that far?

Same question we had for NC's CA40 location...why move them that far?

Ted

EDIT: In the meantime, remaining open to this suggestion - perhaps something else may arise to give reason to this lateral move, though noting we've seen instructions to the battlefield clearance teams the bodies were to be buried on the battlefield and not to be moved back.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 23, 2016 7:55 am**

I am hunting down any images of crosses from Vimy Ridge. In particular I am looking to see if the Battalion Crosses were similar in design and construction. In the process, some interesting images from LAC. We can use our knowledge to put names and places to a few of these - probably more! I am certain that I have seen a picture of the Battalion Cross of the 14th Infantry Battalion - anyone else?

Some of these images provide proof of some of our thoughts! A worthwhile examination.





MIKAN 3194781: (W.W.I - 1914 - 1918)

German prisoners and Canadian Red Cross men assist in the despatching of wounded on a **light railway**. Vimy Ridge. April, 1917.

[between April 9-14, 1917]. [93 KB, 760 X 603]



MIKAN 3522214: (W.W.I - 1914 - 1918)

On the lip of one of the largest craters on Vimy Ridge. Visit of Canadian Journalists to the Front.  
July, 1918. JULY, 1918 [296 KB, 1000 X 788]

**Note there is no water in this crater.**



MIKAN 3397842: Grange Crater on Vimy Ridge blown by Canadians.  
July, 1917. July, 1917. [211 KB, 1000 X 803]  
**Note what appears to be a memorial on the lip of the crater.**





MIKAN 3403347: Canadian graves on Vimy.

July, 1917. July, 1917. [201 KB, 1000 X 796]

We can identify the location of this burial area as 44a.s.29.d (same as 36c) as we can see the grave of Sgt. A. E. Lambert #114600 of the 1st C.M.R. He was exhumed from this location and buried at Bois-Carre British Cemetery in Thelus. Here is the corresponding COG-BR document.

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES. (EXHUMATION AND REBURIALS).**

**BURIAL RETURN.** Report Ref. No. V.S.C. 10.

Name of Cemetery of Re-burial: BOIS GARRE CEMETERY Location B. 7. c.15.80. Sheet 51b Buried: 18.6.19.

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map Reference where body found.	Was cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any Effects forwarded to Base.
3	E	1	B. 7 Sheet 51b	G.R.U. 2	13.4.17 <del>925216</del> Pte. Barnett J.W. 5th Can Bn	None
		2	"	"	13.4.17. 925878 Pte. Matthews B. 5th Can Bn	"
		3	"	"	13.4.17. 925110 Pte. Lester G.W. " "	"
		4	"	"	13.4.17. a24165 Col. Keech G. " "	"
		5	"	"	11.9.17. <del>Unknown Canadian Soldier</del>	Picture
		6	A. 1w	G.R.U. 2	11070 Pte. Hoskins A. 4th Can Bn	None
		7	"	"	Unknown British Soldier	"
		8	S. 291 Sheet 44a	En Cross	9.4.17. 104204 Col. Duncan J.M.G. 1st C.M.R.	"
		9	"	"	9.4.17. 781085 Pte. Elliott A.F.B. 2nd C.M.R.	"
		10	"	"	9.4.17. 781461 Lt. Balgicish W.D. " "	"
		11	"	"	9.4.17. Unknown 2nd C.M.R.	"
		12	S. 30.c.5.8.	"	8.4.17. Enl Lieut. MacKenzie	"
		13	"	"	8.4.17. 1st. SA & S.B. 16th Son R.F.C.	"
		14	"	"	2nd Lieut. Everingham G. R.W. Fus.	"
		15	S. 281	G.R.U.2	4.5.17. 219445 Pte. Huntly 1st C.M.R.	"
		16	"	"	4.5.17. 871688 Pte. Whitbread. " "	"
		17	"	"	4.5.17. 218492 Pte. Count B. " "	"
		18	"	"	4.5.17. 187059 Pte. Goochings. " "	"
		19	S. 291	En Cross	4.5.17. 742794 Pte. Arbing H. 24th Can Bn	"
		20	"	"	9.4.17. 187548 Pte. Cockle M. 1st C.M.R.	"
				9.4.17. 114600 Sgt. Lambert A. 1st C.M.R.	"	

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

No. 2 Adv. Sect. A.P. & S.S. E.1110 2-18.

I checked the CVWM and someone has already posted the image from another source. Now the location is known. Lambert CVWM



MIKAN 3403350: Graves of two officers of the Canadian Railway Troops killed while laying a railroad over Vimy Ridge.

August, 1917. Aug., 1917. [143 KB, 1000 X 807]

The one on the right is Captain H. E. R. Hamilton who is buried at Villers Station Cemetery. A little more research and we know that the one on the left is Major Anthony Larelle McHugh.





MIKAN 3403362: Canadian Cemetery near Vimy Station.

December, 1917. Dec., 1917. [147 KB, 1000 X 788]

~~This has been posted in this topic earlier but now that I see the description, it matches a recent post where it was thought that the burial ground might be by a LIGHT RAIL LINE at VIMY STATION. This clearly shows that is now a FACT and not a SUPPOSITION.~~

See this post from July 11th as I thought that they may have erred in the reporting of CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 when it was in fact at 51b.A.11.c.9.7. That is one sector to the right and remember that these are the same people that had it as map 36c (or 44a) instead of 51b so it is quite possible this is the error! Now we have proof that there was a cemetery at 51b.A.11.c.9.7 😊. **Scratch all that as per correction below - that is VIMY STATION and it is THELUS STATION that is at 51b.A.10.c.9.7. Still don't know therefore if there was a light rail line at Thelus Station.**



MIKAN 3403344 Canadian troops keep the graves of their comrades fallen at Vimy, in repair.

June, 1917. June, 1917. [181 KB, 1000 X 805]

Appears to be a French Helmet on the grave on the right? I have not been able to read any names to get a fix on the location.





MIKAN 3379686: 102nd Battalion Memorial. July, 1918.

July, 1918. [267 KB, 1000 X 1264]

This one is labelled incorrectly as it is April 1917 and not July 1918. The one on the top is Major R. G. H. Brydon. Take a look at his page and you will see he was at Canadian Cemetery Givenchy Road 44a.S.21.b.1.3. I have sent in a correction.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by ejwalshe

Posted: Sat Jul 23, 2016 11:05 am



Hold the phone!

Richard:

See this post from July 11th as I thought that they may have erred in the reporting of CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 when it was in fact at 51b.A.11.c.9.7. That is one sector to the right and remember that these are the same people that had it as map 36c (or 44a) instead of 51b so it is quite possible this is the error! Now we have proof that there was a cemetery at 51b.A.11.c.9.7 😊.

I am not following the logic here. No proof there were burials at 51b.A.11.c.9.7. This alternative location was one of the first locations we investigated (thinking the same thing...what if it was a transcription error A.11 instead of A.10). While it is an interesting alternative providing a location inside the 16th's battlefield and close to the Black Line, it is a little too far back from the Red Line (about 300 yards from the 2nd objective) where most of the men fell. We cannot draw proof from a hypothesized transcription error.

Richard:

Note there is no water in this crater.

Now this is a very interesting observation, and the reason for this was explained to me by Dominique Zanardi, proprietor of Le Tommy in Pozieres. I think the man knows what he is talking about, as he has discovered approximately 60 bodies in the Pozieres region over the past 20 years or so. "It's easy," he said. Easy? Dominique's strategy is to arrive at dawn and observe whenever and wherever there is a new foundation, new road works, new pipeline or any works which involve breaking ground.

Anyway....no water? Unlike Ieper and the Somme, the water table is much lower, and the chalky substrate does not hold water for long - you may find water in these holes following a heavy rain, but it dissipates fairly quickly. Dominique also explained why these large craters were used for mass (temporary) burials. They actually helped preserve bodies, and were the easiest and fastest way to perform a burial.

The bodies were tossed over the rim of the crater, and as the bodies fell to the center of the crater, the loose chalky substrate would follow along with the body and add a layer of chalk over each body. Certainly not the most dignified burials I have heard of, but quite expedient. I find it difficult thinking of the profound effect this had upon the Labour companies.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 23, 2016 2:42 pm**

*ejwalshe wrote:*

Hold the phone!

I am not following the logic here. No proof there were burials at 51b.A.11.c.9.7.

I did not create that, it is what the image says but my error is worse than it appears - make that two (2) as Tim caught the other one 😊 :

*LAC Image wrote:*

MIKAN 3403362: Canadian Cemetery near Vimy Station.  
December, 1917. Dec., 1917. [147 KB, 1000 X 788]

When I was looking at just the maps I was unable to determine if there was a LIGHT RAIL LINE at Vimy Station. What I am saying is that this picture proves that there is such a rail line. I am not saying that it is proof that this is CA40, just that it is a cemetery on a Light Rail Line.

NOW THE PROBLEM IS that I am really out to lunch on this one because 51b.A.11.c.9.7 is beside THELUS STATION and not VIMY STATION.

**Richard wrote:**

Note there is no water in this crater.

**Ted wrote:**

Now this is a very interesting observation, and the reason for this was explained to me by Dominique Zanardi, proprietor of Le Tommy in Pozieres.

Thank you for that, it makes perfect sense. We did not think they would throw bodies into a crater full of water and so they probably did not. They were full of water on 9 April 1917, as reported in the war diaries. I wonder if they could have been dry by the 12th?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sat Jul 23, 2016 6:51 pm**

This may not be helpful as far as this thread is concerned but it may well be time to bring up Grade 8 geography class.

We may all have heard of an "Artesian Well"...

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artesian\\_aquifer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artesian_aquifer)

It may be a good thing to realize that...

Artesian wells were named after the former province of Artois in France, where many artesian wells were drilled by Carthusian monks from 1126.

Let us now have a look at Artois...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artois>

I'm not sure how far down the aquifer was/is but the area was known for water "wanting" to get toward the ground surface.

If I recall correctly the ground around Alice Springs, in Australia, is well known for water coming up from wells without the need for pumps...Mr. Proctor would be proud. 😊

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Nov 02, 2016 3:08 pm**

Hardly a day goes by I don't think of the 16th and that we will find a **legible photo** of the cross which was once over CA40.

I'd be willing to bet Jo (206CEF) will uncover this photo. Any takers?

In other news, purchased my Left Behind t-shirt today to show my support for Norm once again.

There is a limited run of 500 t-shirts and hoodies available.

Recover Our Vimy Heroes • Retrouver Nos Héros De Vimy

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Nov 02, 2016 7:35 pm**

Honestly I do not understand why the same repetition continues:

**Norm Christie wrote:**

Due to an "administrative" error, it is believed that they were not moved from a temporary battlefield mass grave, a mine crater, to a military cemetery after the war. Ottawa historian Norm Christie made the discovery during his work as a researcher. - See more at: [http://teesforthepeople.com/products/vi ... h3Fqd.dpuf](http://teesforthepeople.com/products/vi...h3Fqd.dpuf)

I do give credit to Norm in this new quotation to say "*it is believed*" but it should be "*I believe*", the same as some of us (*not all*) here say that it is only our belief that these findings are incorrect. We know for a fact that they were never moved from a "mine crater" as there is no crater at that location. It may have been a trench, that is acknowledged.

There is no evidence yet presented that these men are not in Nine Elms Cemetery as the CWGC has reported.

**CWGC reports wrote:**

The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including:- GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

That is the fundamental problem in the Christie video. There are more than enough UNKNOWNs in that cemetery to account for the missing men of the 16th Battalion Canadian Scottish. That is never mentioned in the video. Members here, not me, have presented locations that match that description and in the area where the 16th Battalion was at the time. Why are those being ignored?

I remain disappointed that Norm Christie has never acknowledged the alternatives. Not only have we acknowledged many alternatives, we have studied them in detail with an open mind and active participation by a number of our members and those from the "outside" that were potential investors. It is time now that we focus on the reality that there are many alternatives for CA40 and not one of us knows which one is correct. Why can we not work as a team to focus on the issue and find the correct answer?

If you are reading this Norm, which I hope you are, please join in the discussion. If you can challenge the findings we have presented here, that would be fantastic! Every member of every team that is involved in this investigation has the same desire - to find the answer. None of us, including myself, should participate in this investigation wearing a blindfold. Yes, I believe that that the trench (not a mine crater) at **51.b.A.10.c.9.7** should be investigated, but so should several other sites. If money was raised to do this investigation, use it to study all the sites that have been proposed. Don't waste the money on a film that promotes one concept. Wait until the results are in and THEN do the film.

This is my opinion and mine alone.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **raughton**

Posted: **Sat Nov 05, 2016 8:12 am**

I do not know why I never thought of it before but all this time I had my Grandfather Laughton's original trench map from April 9 1917 for 51b NW1 which includes all the area between Roclincourt (where he was) and Thelus, the precise area for the CA40 hunt.

And it shows the light rail lines!



What I did not notice before looking at this map is that the rail line runs along the west side of the road from Roclincourt to Thelus and that it intersects with the small line that then goes west to the Nine Elms tree line. At the time of that map, there is no section of the rail line running east past the road.

Once it is clear that the rail line is there, it also does show up in the period trench maps as the rail line:

---+---+---+---+

Does this mean that there really is a location that is "*274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track*", as described for CA40 in the Nine Elms CWGC description? If you place yourself on the "main road" at about **51b.A.18.0.4** and look west for 274 metres (300 yards) you would find yourself at **51b.A.17.b.7.5**.

I believe, which I think Ted can confirm, that this puts us back close to where he first noted a possible location for CA40 in just to the southeast of the cloverleaf on the new road "Autoroute des Anglais" (E15). Specifically, it would be in the field between that road and "Rue d'Arras" (the Roclincourt-Thelus Road).

The difference here is that there is NO rail line on the 1917 trench map in sector **51b.A.11.c** so if the description is based on what existed in 1917 then it had to be the lower route in **51b.A.17.b**. If the location was as described on the basis of what existed in 1918 then either option is possible.

The question about this possible location would be whether it is too far south to have been used by the 16th Battalion.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sat Nov 05, 2016 9:25 am**

See Brad's post of Fri Jan 29, 2016 12:22 am in this thread for great photos of the light rail.

The light rail we are looking for was created after 9 April 9 1917 and is not shown in your grandfather's map.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sun Nov 06, 2016 9:46 am**

I appreciate that Norm's funding had not reached his goal of \$110,000 but I would have thought it would be a natural to conduct the investigation in advance of the Vimy anniversary in April 2017. It would be a quite an event to announce the finding of the missing men around the anniversary (assuming Norm is correct). I feel that any further investigations into alternate theories is at a stand-still until Norm announces his findings.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Nov 29, 2016 7:22 am**

The "teesforthepeople" campaign has ended with 311 of the 500 shirts sold. I bought mine and I have asked Derek if others can still order, even though the campaign is closed.

I bought mine once I found out all the money is going to the actual site testing - the ground penetrating radar tests - and not the film production:

Almost 100 years since the battle of Vimy Ridge was won by Canadian Soldiers of the Great War, a search is underway to locate the remains of 44 Canadian heroes, including one Victoria Cross recipient, who were accidentally left behind in a mass grave. The time is now for a grateful nation to finally lay them to rest. How did this happen? Due to an "administrative" error, it is believed that they were not moved from a temporary battlefield mass grave, a mine crater, to a military cemetery after the war. Ottawa historian Norm Christie made the discovery during his work as a researcher. The 44 soldiers were part of the 16th Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Canadian Division. They died on April 9, 1917 during the Battle of Vimy Ridge, a pivotal day in young nation's history. **By buying a special edition, "Left Behind" T-shirt or sweatshirt you are helping to raise the funds**

for special ground penetrating radar to confirm if a French farm is the present resting place of these 44 Canadian soldiers. Our goal is to confirm their location, based on historical burial records and, if found, to identify and finally lay to them to rest. - See more at: [http://teesforthepeople.com/products/vi ... yFuNj.dpuf](http://teesforthepeople.com/products/vi...yFuNj.dpuf)

Previously I was of the understanding that they were not going ahead with the testing at this stage. It would appear that some of the people and companies I worked with in the past on geotechnical investigations in Europe are involved in the project on the technical side. If so, that should resolve the issues with conducting GPR in the chalk substrate, as they do know what they are doing.

It would have been great if we could have looked at the other sites as part of the project. Guess we have to do our own campaign.

Good luck Norm!

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Nov 30, 2016 3:06 pm**

Previously I was of the understanding that they were not going ahead with the testing at this stage. It would appear that some of the people and companies I worked with in the past on geotechnical investigations in Europe are involved in the project on the technical side. If so, that should resolve the issues with conducting GPR in the chalk substrate, as they do know what they are doing.

It sounds like you have inside information that the project will be underway sooner rather than later. I wish him all the luck and hope that we have an answer one way or the other.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Thu Dec 01, 2016 2:24 am**

*rlaughton wrote:*

....This is my opinion and mine alone.

Not only yours by any means!



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 15 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Dec 09, 2016 11:07 am**

It has taken some time, in amongst the CWGC requests for reports, to get this spreadsheet completed.

This relates to the question:

***Is it possible that the 44 men that are supposedly lost from CA 40 are in fact buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery?***

This question came about as a result of two (2) previous facts:

1. In the CA40 Video with Norm Christie, he went to the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and checked all the graves and there was no record of the missing men of the 16th Battalion. This was misleading, as if they are unknown there would have been nothing on the grave to say who they were.
2. In the earlier spreadsheets we counted all the empty graves, which was all of those where Canadian Unknowns were located. That analysis told us that there were 97 graves for UNKNOWNNS and 67 of those had NO UNIT affiliation, so they could be 16th Battalion graves. As such, there could be 44 men of the Canadian Scottish scattered throughout the cemetery.

This spreadsheet analysis goes one step further to make the answer more realistic. We have a general idea where the men of the 16th Battalion went and thus where they would have most likely fallen. In the areas farther to the south (the 16th was on the NORTH or LEFT flank), it was more likely that they were men of the 14th or 15th Battalions. **So how many spots could realistically contain men of the 16th Battalion?**

To answer this question I went back to the original September 2014 approach at Vis-en-Artois and I put back into the spreadsheet ALL THE MISSING GRAVES. The CWGC download only has data for graves that are identified. To accomplish that, you have to sort the graves, then break them down into new columns for PLOT, ROW, GRAVE and then manually go back and add in the ones that are missing. All of those are in RED text and the existing ones stayed as BLACK text. There are some other groups in different colour to highlight odd groups.

Once that step was accomplished, I went back through all the COG-BR documents (and GRRFs if no exhumation data) and manually inserted all the trench map coordinates for the KNOWN and the UNKNOWN. For future reference, I also colour coded (highlighted) the different battlefield grave groupings, such as CA3, CA39, CB10 and so on. You can see that on the spreadsheet. That was based on what we knew of the location of those sites as noted in this post.

After all that was complete I marked (\*) all the UNKNOWN graves that could belong to a man of the 16th Battalion Canadian Scottish, the added those up [=COUNTA(F2:F682)].

**Answer: TOTAL GRAVES THAT COULD BE 16th Bn. = 40**

So what does this mean? Here are some ideas:

1. If this process was precise, we are short 4 graves sites for the 16th Battalion men in the A10 and A11 sectors. (see correction to this statement at end)

2. It is possible that 16th Battalion men could be in some of the other graves that were not counted, such as in the upper reaches of A16 which I did not count as possible. If so, then they may all be accounted for in this analysis.
3. It is likely that not all of the 40 counted had men of the 16th Battalion, as we know that other units moved through the same area (i.e. 4th Battalion, MG units, etc.) As such for every 1 you add from another location you might have subtract 1 that did not apply.
4. NOBODY has ever said that all the men of the CEF were recovered from the battlefield, even from the known CA, CB, CC or CD burial sites, so there may still be men out there - so perhaps only 30 of the 44 made it to Nine Elms.

In the end, the analysis does show that is within the realm of possibility (**at a high level**) that many of the missing men of the 16th Battalion are in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Those that are not may still be on the battlefield, or perhaps they are in one of the surrounding cemeteries, several of which are in close proximity to Nine Elms. A similar analysis at the Arras Road Cemetery might provide all that is needed to account for all the missing men?

Does this suggest that it is unreasonable to assume that all 44 men are in a crater somewhere? I leave that to each individual to answer for themselves. You can guess my answer.

ON A FINAL THOUGHT, I just remembered they found 4 of the men that were missing and so the number is not 44 it is 40 exactly! Is it coincidence then that this analysis came up with that number exactly?

Here is the spreadsheet so you can see the numbers are real:

#### NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY INCLUDING UNKNOWNNS

Some examples for those that don't want to check the spreadsheet:

A general example where graves of UNKNOWNNS are added back:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	grave	Plot	Row	Grave	Multi	P16?	Location	surname	forename	initials	death 1	death 2	rank	regiment
128	I. C. 1.	1	C	1				CHORLTON		N	16-07-18		Gunner	Royal Garrison A
129	I. C. 2.	1	C	2				CUTHBERT	WILLIAM JAMES	W J	16-07-18		Serjeant	Royal Garrison A
130	I. C. 3.	1	C	3				BONNER		G E	16-07-18		Gunner	Royal Garrison A
131		1	C	4			51b.A.16.a.9.9	UCS						
132		1	C	5			51b.A.16.b.3.8	UCS						
133		1	C	6		*	51b.A.10.d.2.4	UCS 16th Bn.						
134		1	C	7		*	51b.A.10.d.0.0	UCS 16th Bn.						
135	I. C. 8.	1	C	8			51b.A.17.c.9.7	BALFOUR		P A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infant
136	I. C. 9.	1	C	9			51b.A.10.d.20.41	RUD	ALEKSEI	A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infant
137		1	C	10		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41	UCS						
138		1	C	11		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41	UCS						
139	I. C. 12.	1	C	12			51b.A.17.a.8.0	WRIGHT		D	11-04-17		Private	Canadian Infant
140		1	C	13			51b.A.17.a.9.0	must be UCS						
141		1	C	14			51b.A.17.a.9.0	must be UCS Sgt.	10th Sgts in A.16.c					

This is an example where the BURIAL GROUPS are marked:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	grave	Plot	Row	Grave	Multi	P16?	Location	surname	forename	initials	death 1	death 2	rank	regiment
200	I. D. 36.	1	D	36			CA1 51b.A.16.d.3.4	BARTON	RALPH	R	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
201	I. D. 37.	1	D	37			CA1 51b.A.16.d.3.4	FLOWERDAY	CHARLES AMBROSE	C A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
202	I. D. 38.	1	D	38			CA24 51b.A.16.d.3.4	EZRIC		A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
203	I. D. 39.	1	D	39			CA24 51b.A.16.d.3.4	SCOTT		R	09-04-17		Gunner	Canadian Field A
204		1	D	40			CA24 51b.A.16.d.3.4	US in same group						
205	I. E. 1.	1	E	1			CA24 51b.A.10.c.2.2	HUDSON	BERNARD HENRY	B H	12-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
206	I. E. 2.	1	E	2			CA41 51b.A.10.c.3.2	DUFFEY		J B	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
207	I. E. 3.	1	E	3			CA41 51b.A.10.c.3.2	CAMERON		A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
208	I. E. 4.	1	E	4			CA41 51b.A.10.c.3.2	STANTON		M A	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
209	I. E. 5.	1	E	5			CA41 51b.A.10.c.3.2	KINSMAN	GEORGE LAWRENCE	G L	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
210	I. E. 6.	1	E	6			51b.A.10.d.9.3	PAULSON		P T	09-04-17		Private	Canadian Infanti
211		1	E	7		*	51b.A.10.d.3.5	UCS						
212		1	E	8		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10	3 UCS						
213		1	E	9		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10	3 UCS						
214		1	E	10		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10	3 UCS						
215		1	E	11		*	57b.A.10.a.2.8	UNKNOWN						with 2 French
216	I. E. 12.	1	E	12			51b.A.10.c.9.5	THORNE	SYDNEY LODGE	S L	26-11-16		Major	Canadian Infanti
217	I. E. 13.	1	E	13			51b.A.10.c.9.5	PUNNETT	HUBERT GORDON	H G	26-11-16		Lieutenant	Canadian Infanti
218	I. E. 14.	1	E	14			51b.A.10.c.9.5	GODBEER		W T	26-11-16		Private	Canadian Infanti
219	I. E. 15.	1	E	15			51b.A.10.c.9.5	BROWNLEE	GEORGE	G	26-11-16		Private	Canadian Infanti
220	I. E. 16.	1	E	16			51b.A.10.c.9.5	COMPTON		H	26-11-16		Private	Canadian Infanti
221	I. E. 17.	1	E	17			51b.A.10.c.9.5	MOIR	WILLIAM SMITH	W S	26-11-16		Private	Canadian Infanti

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Dec 09, 2016 3:52 pm**

Good job, Richard. I am

95%

convinced.

That's a lot of work filling in the missing unknowns...gives me a better appreciation now for Norm's Sacred Places Volumes I-III.

A formal statistical analysis of your research is unnecessary - IMO.

I believe there remain three *other* possibilities to resolving this case, accounting for my 5% uncertainty:

1. Norm Christie's dogged determination will prove us all wrong. Go Norm, Go!

3%

2. The appropriate historical documentation will surface.

2%

3. Compelling evidence (Sir Richard's, that is) will prompt the CWGC to make an extremely rare exception, and exhume one or more UCS's to confirm the existence of 40 UCS of the 16th Battalion.

1%

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Fri Dec 09, 2016 10:10 pm**

Well done Richard, I think you have got this one signed, sealed and delivered.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Dec 10, 2016 10:58 am**



I am skeptical that the CWGC will allow an exhumation of the bodies, especially for identification. If they are convinced that the bodies are located at Nine Elms, I would hope that they would erect a special plaque saying something like - "It is believed that the following soldiers of the 16th Battalion are buried in this Cemetery."

I also agree with Ted's comments about some "historical document surfacing." There must be paperwork in the British Archives regarding the concentration of the bodies.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

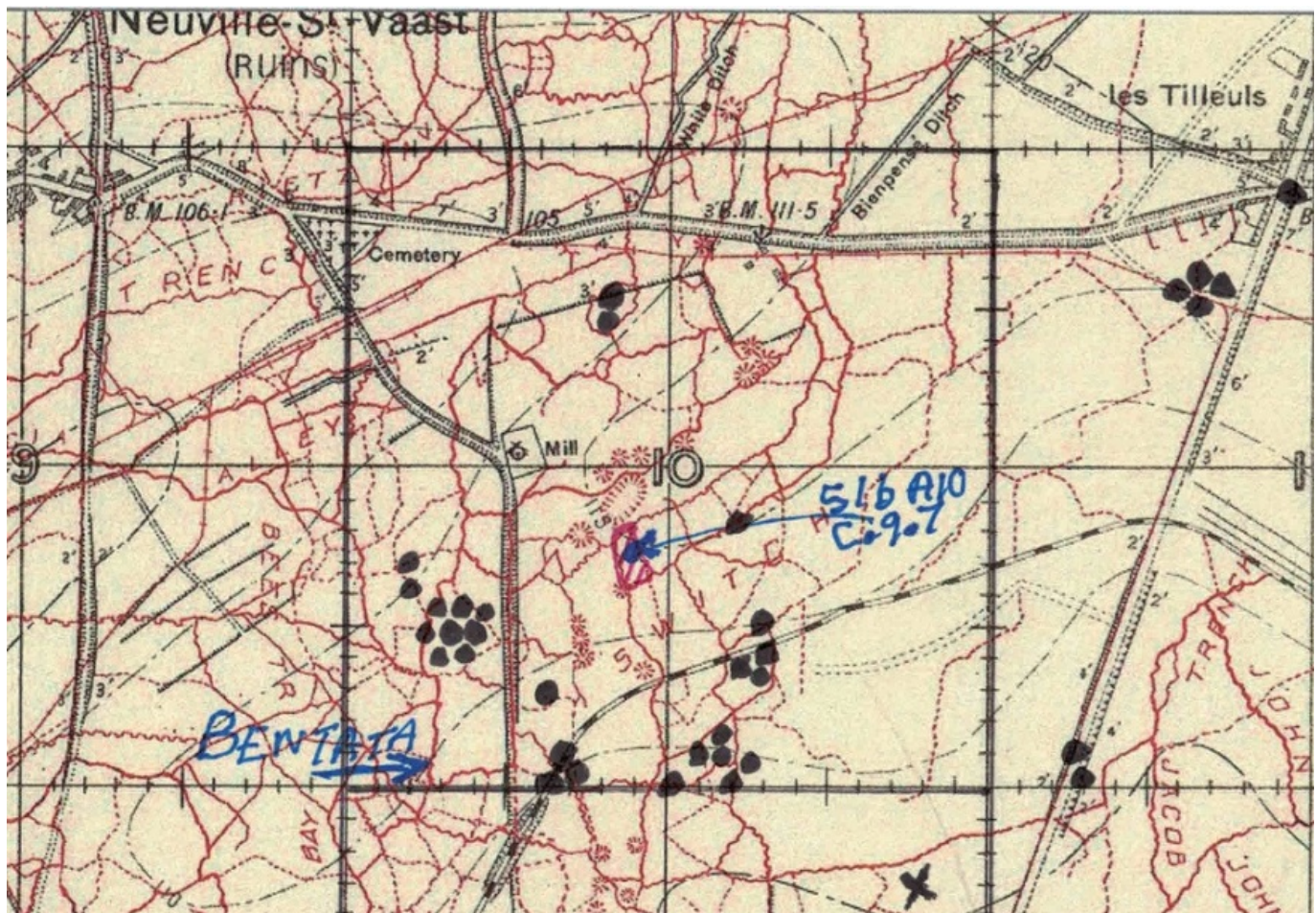
Posted: **Tue Dec 13, 2016 6:58 am**

Out of curiosity, I made a hand notation of where the bodies were found based on the spreadsheet analysis above. I put on the 40 sets of remains, based on the COG-BR records, however they are in groups so I did not overlap them I just nested them.

Consider that on 9 April 1917 there were **57** lost, of which **49** were on the cross and if my records are correct **41** were on the CA40 list.

If all the black dots on this map are 16th Battalion men, which is most likely, then there is no way that there are another 40 men still missing. I have no idea why I never thought of that before?

For sure there are still men missing, or they were collected and placed in another cemetery, but to me it looks like they are not missing at all. So even if we did find the location of the real CA40, would we find anything?



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Wed Dec 14, 2016 7:40 am**

Using the table format function created earlier, this is the actual list of the missing men of the 16th Battalion and what their files say about their whereabouts. It would appear that if there was no reference to your burial as being at CA40 then you did not get on the CROSS LIST, such as the case for ADAMOVICH and BETHEL. As you can see from the blot map in the post above, ADAMOVICH might be one of the lads off to the right in the A.11 northern sector - note the blot group in that location. BAGULEY might be one of the boys out there as well, as he was reported killed near Farbus, so later in the day (he is my Milton boy I am hunting!).

Although we do not know exactly where our **Victoria Cross** winner is located (MILNE) we have a good description from the event that we know where he physically was when he fell (see this post). Private MILNE was past the RED LINE at Swischen Stellung when he fell, so likely past the two dots in Sector A.11 (b,d). If they brought him back to the Red Line and buried him where they were holding the line, a logical assumption, then one of those dots might be Private Milne. That would potentially place him in Grave **3.C.2 (COG-BR 2618050)**. [The other dot at 51b.A.11.d.2.9 is an error - that was at 51b.A.17.d.2.9].

surname	#	rank	Cross 9	CA40	Details
ADAMOVICH	'736633'	Pte.			NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge in A10 to A.11.b and d
ALLEN	'420819'	Pte.	x	x	KIA Farbus Woods: Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
ARMITAGE	'625286'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
ATTWOOD	'736569'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 - grave not located
BAGULEY	'718192'	Pte.	x	x	KIA FARBUS but reported at A.10.c.9.7 site
BALL	'700410'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
BETHEL	'719115'	Pte.			NRB: MIA then KIA
BETTS	'736746'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
BLAIK	'736108'	Pte.	x	x	KIA at Objective: but reported in CA40 as well ??
BONIVER	'871504'	Pte.	x	x	Nine Elms and A.10 listed - maybe just reference to Mem. Cross?
BRADSHAW	'43945'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.636)
BROWN	'718661'	Pte.	x	x	Clearer note - "Memorial No. 9 to above and others" as on many
CHANDLER	'28823'	L.Cpl.	x	x	"Memorial No. 9 to above and others" - says does not mark grave
CLEMONS	'721564'	Pte.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
COOK	'872090'	Pte.	x		KIA and Vimy Memorial
COWPER	'420717'	Cpl.			NRB: MIA then KIA (A.36 #10177)
CURLEY	'258460'	Pte.	x		NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge
DICKSON	'160168'	Pte.	x	x	KIA instant shell fire - CA40 listing as others
GIBBONS	'624801'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 listing as others
GLASSFORD	'722078'	Pte.	x	x	Registered 51b.A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.637 #17557)
GOODING	'736317'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a

					not 51b.
GORRIE	'718755'	Pte.	x		NRB: Attack on Vimy Ridge - machine gun fire
HALLIDAY	'624957'	Pte.	x		NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
HAMILTON	'A/20408'	Sgt.	x	x	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a not 51b.
HARPER	'722256'	Pte.			NRB: attack near Vimy (A.645 Sh. 1 #20047)
HAWKINS	'736103'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
HENDERSON	'105644'	Pte.	x		NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
HOOPER	'736880'	Pte.	x	x	At Vimy Ridge 44a.A10.c.9.7 Grave No. C.A.40 (A.657 #???)
HOWIE	'628188'	L.Cpl.	x	x	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b
KILCUP	'832135'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
KIRBY	'718249'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
LATIMER	'426344'	L.Cpl.	x		Buried near where he fell in "No Man's Land" (A.637 #20544)
LAYCOCK	'70022'	L.Cpl.	x	x	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 (A.652 #26803)
LEITCH	'736651'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 at jump off
MANNING	'718699'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
MILNE, V.C.	'427586'	Pte.	x	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (A.638 #33868)
McCANDLESS	'736171'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected to 51b
McCOWAN	'420765'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 corrected to 51b from attack southwest of Vimy
McKAY	'736402'	Pte.			NRB: attack at Vimy Ridge (A.643 #30677)
McPHAIL	'426601'	L.Cpl.			NRB: attack southeast of Neuville St.Vaast (A.636 A.664 #31637)
McWILLIAMS	'718526'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
OWEN	'859684'	Pte.	x		Attack west of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.637 #36966)
PARSONS	'624593'	Pte.	x	x	CA40 attack west of Thelus
PATTISON	'718269'	Pte.	x	x	KIA at jump-off location: Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PHILLIPS	'105741'	Pte.	x	x	KIA; west of Thelus corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PIPER	'736967'	Pte.	x	x	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.639 #38619)
POWELL	'737084'	Pte.	x	x	KIA: 51b.A.10.c.9.7
PURNELL	'700967'	Pte.	x	x	KIA SE NSV 51b.A10.c.9.7
RUDDOCK	'129200'	Pte.	x	x	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - later corrected to 51b
SIMMONDS	'736075'	Pte.			NRB: (A.636 #43642)
SIMMONS	'77309'	Sgt.	x	x	KIA: Neuville St.Vaast - Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7
SNELGROVE	'624477'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
SPALDING	'874370'	Pte.	x		NRB: KIA
STRICKLER	'625303'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
TALLMAN	'859301'	Pte.			NRB: MIA then KIA (A81 #46831)
TARLTON	'129336'	Pte.	x	x	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
WILLERTON	'719161'	Pte.	x	x	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - photo of cross sent to family Vancouver, B.C.



COUNT

57

49

41

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by cccarson

Posted: Thu Dec 29, 2016 5:43 pm

I think that there has been an amazing amount of work put into trying to confirm/deny/locate CA40 in this string of posts, but I see some serious confusion being tossed into the mix with photos of various crosses/cemeteries in the the LAC archives.

The O series photos are indeed sequential when put in the correct order, rather than the scan/upload/data entry phase. Having pulled down 4000 of them now, and proceeding to get the ones in between that are not v8 sized, I've put a few things in order around that dark cemetery at "Vimy Station"

Forgive the smaller size, but I wanted them to fit in here without filling the screen completely. Also forgive the lack of notations/mikan etc







These are in sequence as they were shot. The photographer was travelling from the south towards Thelus in December of 1917. To locate the photos in sequence simply search "O-(photonumber)" in the advanced archive search at LAC and see the captions they provide. A couple photos beyond the wagons next to the ruined church, there are 2 photos of 13th Battalion men at their dugout.

I'm working to sequence some of the other mystery cemetery/memorial shots that are in this and other posts on the board, to give a better context as to where the photographer was coming from, and where he was heading to. LAC has made a cluster\*#@\$ of the numbers, but there is a definite timeline and route they were all taken in.

Richard, please feel free to move this post if you think it would be better served elsewhere! Just wanted to try and put that cemetery on "the map" as it were. Perhaps this sequence will help show where on the trench maps this particular rail/crossing was.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Thu Dec 29, 2016 6:08 pm**

Without re-ordering the photos it is impossible to do much more than guess based on what a photo contains where there is no title, which I think is what we were doing in those posts you refer to. A sound practice actually as the following suggests.

In fairness to LAC they have a policy of retaining the titles given to materials by their former custodians or owners, in this case the Canadian War Records Office. This is the reason for the inadequate or even incorrect titles: they were assigned by CWRO staff in the UK, at least in part, for whatever "PR" purpose was felt necessary at the time.

That's not my opinion by the way, that is the statement of an LAC staff member, as is the correspondence of the "O" negative numbers to the order in which these photos were taken.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Mar 02, 2017 3:51 pm**

I have been contacted directly in the CA40 case by the CWGC. I have provided them with the links and reports submitted to date. I will let you know what progresses.



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sun Mar 05, 2017 12:12 pm**

*rlaughton wrote:*

I have been contacted directly in the CA40 case by the CWGC. I have provided them with the links and reports submitted to date. I will let you know what progresses.

Surprising in view of what has been posted here. You and others have shown this is a dead letter IMHO.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sun Mar 05, 2017 1:28 pm**

I don't think the issue is dead. There are still 44 missing bodies. We have exhausted all avenues that are available to through the internet and our contacts. I still hope there is further documentation in the Canadian or British archives that will shed light on the burial and/or reburial process - photographs, diaries, etc.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Mon Mar 13, 2017 10:31 am**

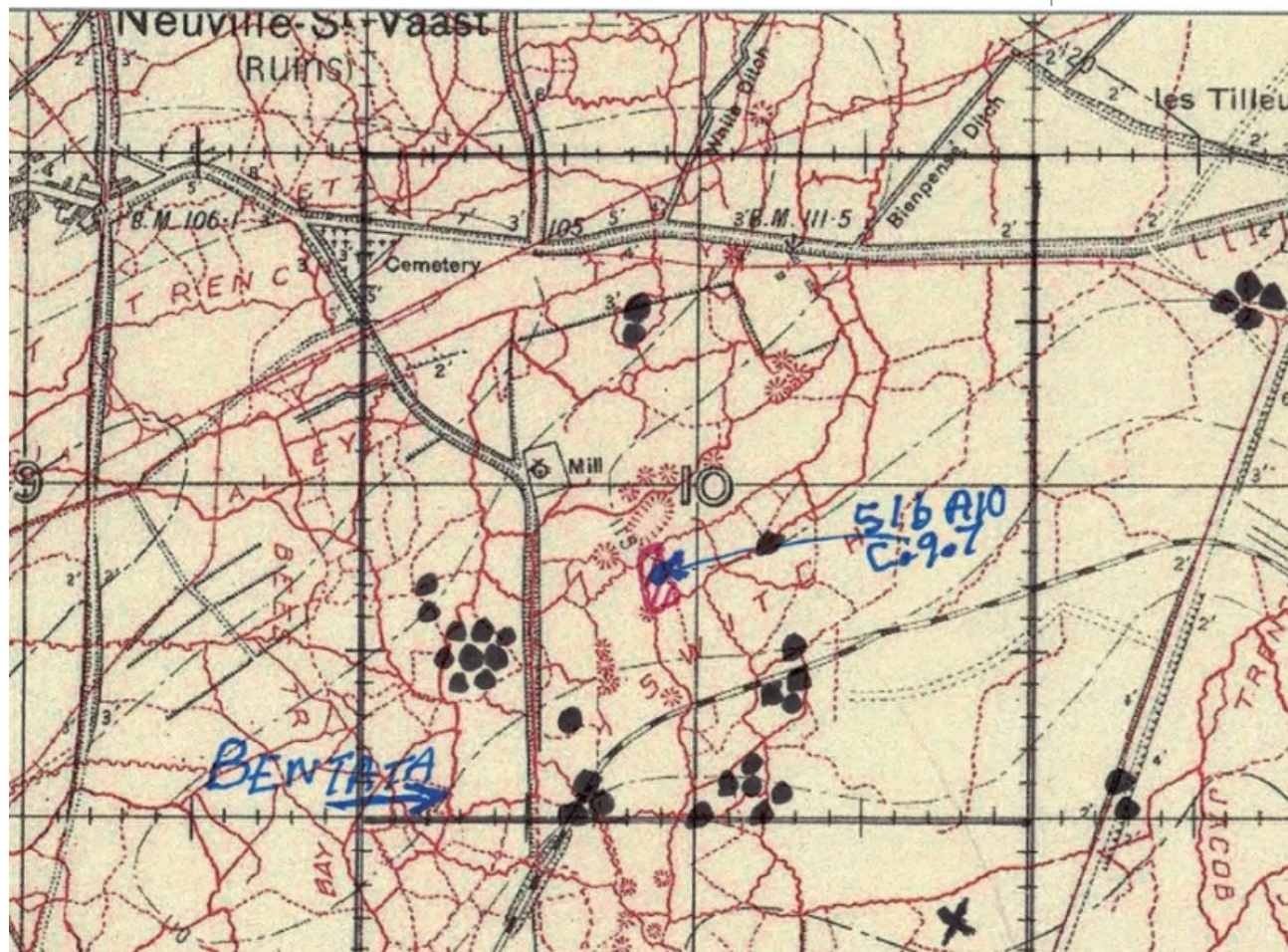
*rlaughton wrote:*

Out of curiosity, I made a hand notation of where the bodies were found based on the spreadsheet analysis above. I put on the 40 sets of remains, based on the COG-BR records, however they are in groups so I did not overlap them I just nested them.

Consider that on 9 April 1917 there were **57** lost, of which **49** were on the cross and if my records are correct **41** were on the CA40 list.

If all the black dots on this map are 16th Battalion men, which is most likely, then there is no way that there are another 40 men still missing. I have no idea why I never thought of that before?

For sure there are still men missing, or they were collected and placed in another cemetery, but to me it looks like they are not missing at all. So even if we did find the location of the real CA40, would we find anything?



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Sun Apr 02, 2017 3:16 pm**

For those interested in this topic Norm Christie's documentary on the CA40 subject airs this Sunday on History - you can find the trailer via the link below.

[http://www.history.ca/video/premieres+s ... s=da#video](http://www.history.ca/video/premieres+s...s=da#video)

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Apr 02, 2017 4:52 pm**

I see that is Sunday April 9th, but the link did not take me to the trailer - I assume it is the same as the one on Breakthrough Entertainment?

<http://www.history.ca/video/premieres+sunday+april+9/video.html?v=911226435874&p=1&s=>

Thanks for the update, this will be interesting!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Sun Apr 02, 2017 9:50 pm**

No it is a different 30 second version of the trailer on History. The one on Breakthrough is a bit longer.

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

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<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 16 of 30

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Mon Apr 03, 2017 6:44 pm**

Any reviews/feedback on this show?

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Mon Apr 03, 2017 6:50 pm**

It doesn't premiere until the 9th of April.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Apr 03, 2017 8:12 pm**

Today was the first time I saw it advertised on the History Channel (753 here in Milton on Cogeco). The PVR is set! I had heard nothing about them doing physical excavations at the site as shown in the clip so I have to say that the information that I had from the CWGC is apparently out-of-date (see Robyn's post). It was my understanding that at the most that they were doing some GPR testing at this phase, if they could get the permits sorted out with the French officials. Apparently they made great strides, hurdled the roadblocks and actually started excavations. Congratulations to Norm Christie, as I had no idea our donations would go this far so fast. The fact that he got all the families there to Neuville-St-Vaast is an incredible feat in such a short period of time.

Our Private Frederick Baguley #718192 is one of the 40 men that Norm is going to uncover, so our community will be glued to their televisions on Sunday night to hear of the results.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Mon Apr 03, 2017 11:30 pm**

*rlaughton wrote:*

Our Private Frederick Baguley #718192 is one of the 40 men that Norm is going to uncover, so our community will be glued to their televisions on Sunday night to hear of the results.

Is he going to uncover him? Is there a chance the documentary will show that they do not (at this point in time) find these men and they are already buried elsewhere as unknowns, or are we to assume he has had a successful result. Will there be a part two?

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Apr 04, 2017 1:06 pm**

Those are the 2 BIG questions.

I'm rooting for Norm. He has been such a good "face" for a collective remembrance; helping to assure that Canada's great veterans really remain part of the fabric of our modern society.

But, if it turns out that the remains of CA40 are not where they have been expected to be, that is



another great story and one we have been privy to due to the many efforts of dedicated contributors here and on other sites as well.

I really hope I can see this content here in the United States...

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Tue Apr 04, 2017 2:09 pm**

I'll be pleased if the remains are discovered, and I appreciate the years of work Norm Christie has put into ensuring that Canadians become educated about our wartime sacrifices. There have really only been a handful of people stepping into that role, and he is probably the most readily recognized by the general public. I'm certain he has inspired many who previously knew next to nothing about the war years, and inspired others to go on to do more. Norm is likely one of those individuals behind what seems to be more and more interest at learning about the contributions of our ancestors.

My thinking is that this may not all be solved in one episode - there are always setbacks and detours with any such grand project. It would be nice to see it all fall neatly in place in one episode and the soldiers found. Perhaps he had access to the documentation that we may not be aware of, and this had to be kept quiet, as those producing TV series need a certain level of drama and mystery to ensure viewer numbers and ratings are good. However, I think this is a pretty major project, and I sense this might become a two or three part series. I also think, just based on human nature, that he must have some kind of compelling information we don't know about that will assure his success, since he'd be unlikely to televise his efforts if it turns out that no mass grave is found.

Then again, I could be wrong!

---

## Norm Christie update 25 April 2017

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Apr 26, 2017 1:01 pm**

Update from Norm last night on FundRazr...this confirms what I had learned from Scott Bradley last week (Scott had seen the latest documentary)...thanks, Scott!

I assume the two dig-locations referred to are the Old Mill uncovered by Norm in April 2016, and the depression, some 150 yards or so south-east of the Old Mill (Norm's presumed location of Grave CA40)...both sites visited by our company following the 16th Bn on April 9, 2017. EDIT: Just noticed Google now shows the Old Mill dig.

I wonder where the other two locations are? Norm is now referring to four locations. Perhaps the other two are much closer to where Brad and I are looking by the Red Line and the Second Objective of the 16th Bn? Not that there's anything wrong with that 😊

### **Norm Christie update April 25, 7:21 PM wrote:**

For those of you who did not see the April 9 documentary "Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers", we had dug two of four possible sites to find the men when a lone French bureaucrat arrived to put a stop order on the dig. Please send the text below to your MP and help us get this stop order lifted.

As a proud Canadian, I was extremely upset to learn the evening of April 9th, 2017, the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, that 44 Canadian soldiers, who died during the battle, still lay in a mine crater under potato fields on the Vimy battlefield and that a single regional French bureaucrat had refused to allow Canadian military historian Norm Christie to continue his search for these men. This information was presented on the History Channel on April 9th in the new documentary "Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers"

(see Breakthrough Entertainment -Search for the Heroes of Vimy)

Mr. Christie has personally raised tens of thousands of dollars from ordinary Canadians to conduct a search for the specific unmarked mine crater (CA40) where these men lay, so that they can be exhumed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (the CWGC) and given a proper burial. Mr. Christie has undertaken this campaign himself (see Fundrazr Help Recover Our Vimy Heroes), as neither the CWGC nor Canada's Department of National Defense has a program to look for Canada's missing soldiers. Mr. Christie had the permission of the farmers who owned the land, and the support and cooperation of the municipal government of Thélus, local deminers of the Ministère de l'Intérieur, Sécurité civile and others in France. He had recently pinpointed a precise section of these fields where the men mostly probably lay and had begun excavations.

Despite much support locally in France, and at home in Canada, a single regional French bureaucrat has put a stop order on any continued excavation by Mr. Christie in these fields. The motivation of this bureaucrat is unclear.

As one of your constituents, I am writing to you today to respectfully ask you to contact the Prime Minister and the Minister of Global Affairs to ask that the Canadian Government make a formal request of the Government of France to intervene in this matter and to secure Mr. Christie permission to continue his search.

These 44 Canadian soldiers of World War I deserve a proper burial after 100 years. The many families of these men, who Mr. Christie has been working with, have requested their remains be recovered. The recovery and proper burial of Canadian soldiers is not only the moral responsibility of the Canadian government but also their legal responsibility. The Canadian government cannot abandon these brave Canadians any more than it could abandon Canadian soldiers' graves in Afghanistan.

P.S.: The documentary Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers is available here. Note you must have latest version of Flash Player installed.

P.S.S.: Very significant audio at the 9:57 mark: **"...the bodies were moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery, a mere 300 yards from where they had first been buried."**

Various distances from Nine Elms Military Cemetery:

750 yards to Grave CA 40 in depression south-east of the Old Mill  
1,000 yards to Red Line and 2nd Objective of 16th Bn  
**300 yards north-north-east to fenced-in rectangular wood.**

I mentioned the above wood to the rep once again at CWGC Arras head office - he had failed to follow up on my request.

This wood now intrigues me more than ever - is it the same to which the audio refers to?

P.S.S.S.: Graphic at 34:40 mark confirms Norm's location of CA40 is the one we have at 150 yards south-east of the Old Mill. "T5" is Vissec Crater. And 47:00 mark leads me to conclude all four "targets" are within the same 50 yard x 50 yard area.

-----

(Removed from the other thread).

Correct me if I am wrong, but where is the discussion here in either of these threads regarding my

comment: P.S.S.: Very significant audio at the 9:57 mark: "...the bodies were moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery, a mere 300 yards from where they had first been buried."

*300 yards from where they were first buried?*

This is a very bold statement, and I do not see/hear where is this location 300 yards from Nine Elms Military cemetery?

1. Where they are now, and where they were first buried may be one in the same location.
2. I've never been comfortable with any "first buried" location which:
  - a) does not match the CWGC description of Grave CA40
  - b) is not on the battlefield of the 16th Bn
  - c) is far too close to their jump-off point (Norm's presumed location of Grave CA40)
  - d) Even this reference to a location 300 yards from Nine Elms is NOT on the battlefield of the 16th Bn (close but no cigar).
3. We know Lt Cowan and his company made it to the 2nd Objective...looking west of the A26 makes no sense...way too far to bring these men back for their first burial.

It's been more than a year (January 2016) since I suggested Norm should look at 51b.a.11.d.8.8 (50.3513, 2.79579) and center his 2500 sq yd search area here. I am confident this was the original location of the men, but have no confidence they are still there.

EDIT: Much discussion here, once again, regarding Norm's insistence on doing it on his own. Took a while for my bruised ego to heal after being rebuffed by Norm on my first encounter with him - and now I support his cause, even though I still do not agree with him. I'd rather be a doorway than just another fence for Norm...he has a very difficult task which few can understand (I know Lambis Englezos would agree). I've said it before, and will say it again - if Norm moves his search over to the east side of the A26, finds the original grave location, and takes all the credit...I will have no problem with that. All that matters is finding these men.

***Lambis Englezos wrote:***

It has been a journey; there have been some frustrations and active discouragement. Media and political pressure was applied to stop us doing what we believed right.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Apr 26, 2017 4:16 pm**

Ted:

This topic spilled over into a second topic, perhaps to be reintegrated into the first topic. It was started by someone else.

I put all my detailed comments in that topic:

New documentary - Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers

As you will see, I have tried my best to pinpoint the locations based on the video.

It is also important to remember that the CWGC reported to us that the French stopped the dig because Norm Christie did not have the proper permits for the work. You can not blame them for that



error. They did what they should have done. You can not complain that you got a unlawful speeding ticket because you are not licenced to drive on the highway!

Unless I am missing something, the link you provided is for the trailer not the show?

For the fenced area, are you talking about CA39? Greg got us an answer on that site.

Cheers!

---

## French bureaucrat stops dig

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu May 11, 2017 1:42 pm**

Regarding the stoppage of Norm's dig, Norm has asked those interested to sign the petition over at Change.org:

### Petition link

Norm also asked a couple of weeks ago to forward a letter to your MP and to cc:

His Excellency Nicolas Chapuis  
Ambassador of France  
42 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, ON  
K1M 2C9.

Suggested text from Norm below...

***Norm Christie wrote:***

As a proud Canadian, I was extremely upset to learn on the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, that the bodies of 44 Canadian soldiers, who died for their country, lie unmarked in a potato field that was once part of the Vimy battlefield. According to the new documentary "Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers" (Breakthrough Entertainment ) which aired on the History Channel on April 9th, 2017, a single regional French bureaucrat has refused to allow Canadian military historian Norm Christie and the families of these soldiers to continue their search for the lost men.

Since neither the Commonwealth War Graves Commission nor Canada's Department of National Defense has a program to look for Canada's missing soldiers, Mr. Christie has undertaken this campaign himself (Help Recover Our Vimy Heroes on Fundrazr). He personally raised tens of thousands of dollars from ordinary Canadians, who want these soldiers found, exhumed and properly buried. He obtained the permission of the farmers who own the land, and the support and cooperation of the municipal government of Thélus, local deminers of the Ministère de l'Intérieur, Sécurité civile and others in France. After thorough research and geophysical investigation, Mr. Christie has pinpointed a precise area where the men mostly likely lie and has begun excavations.

And yet, despite much support locally in France, and at home in Canada, a single regional French bureaucrat has put a stop order on any continued excavation by Mr. Christie in these fields. The motivation of this bureaucrat is unclear.

These 44 Canadian soldiers of World War I deserve a proper burial. Their families have requested their remains be recovered. The proper burial of Canadian soldiers is not only a moral responsibility of the Canadian government but a legal one. Our government cannot abandon these brave Canadians any more than it could abandon Canadian soldiers' graves in

Afghanistan, or any other conflict zone around the globe.

As one of your constituents, I respectfully ask you to contact the Prime Minister and the Minister of Global Affairs to ask that the Canadian Government make a formal request of the Government of France to intervene in this matter and to secure Mr. Christie permission to continue his search.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu May 11, 2017 7:01 pm**

I am not so sure this is a good idea? Norm says that the French Bureaucrat's intentions were unclear but in the petition it says:

Canadian historian Norm Christie had embarked to recover 44 corpses of Canadian soldiers who fought and died in the Battle of Vimy Ridge that were buried in a mass grave which exact location is unknown. In the third day of searching for the 44 bodies, Norm's dig was halted by the French Government, who used a law that was implemented during the Second World War by Nazi Occupied France to discourage French resistance.

There are as always some problems with this statement:

1. There are 40 not 44, so that needs to be fixed finally.
2. There is NO EVIDENCE that they are in a MASS GRAVE, so Norm please tell everyone about all the possibilities, including that the CWGC may be correct and they are in Nine Elms.
3. Let others know about the CEFSG alternative location and that it has been submitted to the CWGC. They do not have to agree with either, just clear the air.
4. The CWGC reported that the dig was cancelled because Norm did not have the correct permits, so tell us the COMPLETE story. Did he have the permits or not? I would be surprised if the CWGC was incorrect, but I look at all of this with an open mind. Norm, please post a copy of your permits so we can see that you are correct.

Golder Associates is a highly reputable firm and they were responsible for the sub-surface investigations and the dig. If they had the correct permits, that would have been stated. I am still not clear if it was "Golder Volunteers" or "Golder Associates" that were responsible for the work. I can contact them in Mississauga and get a quick answer to this question.

Some members might want to respond to their MP that they support the CWGC and/or the CEFSG, rather than Norm Christie. If only Norm would participate in the process this could all be avoided.

Again, this is my opinion and mine alone.

Richard

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Thu May 11, 2017 7:16 pm**

*rlaughton wrote:*

I am not so sure this is a good idea? . . . Again, this is my opinion and mine alone. Richard

My opinion also. Peter

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**Posted: **Sat May 13, 2017 1:41 am**

I watched the program when I returned from Europe. I may be a bit foggy but why was Norm digging in more than one location? I thought his theory was the one location at CA40. Is he expanding his search and charging at windmills and hoping to find any misplaced body?

The search makes for great TV (I actually liked the program) and it opens the future for more searches, more TV shows and more money. I don't buy the lone "Inspector Clouseau" excuse shutting down the show for no reason. Norm advertised his dig at CA40. Why was he digging at other locations?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Sat May 13, 2017 6:39 am**

Brad:

You may have forgotten that there is a separate topic on the new show. Each of the topics now has a MODERATOR COMMENT in the FIRST POST - as here of that topic that provides the linkage. There was talk of combining the topics that was abandoned as they are different. I see you were posting in the other topic while overseas

Here is the comment post I made on the History Channel version about TARGETS 1, 2 and 3. They were all in the same generic area, albeit in a much larger frame than Norm described, but all well away from where we suspected CA40 might be if such a place still existed (i.e. 51b.A.11.d.8.8 = 50.3513 2.7985).

It appeared to me that either Norm or Chris (Golder Associates) realized that they could not be specific that CA40 was exactly at the location marked on the many COD or E-13 files, or that the different records were using a generic description of that area, thus they needed to try and narrow down where the site was located in April 1917. It was good news that Norm had changed his fixed view that it might not be a crater, as demonstrated by his digging at the site of the "Black Line Trench", although I don't recall that he ever said that he had changed his opinion on that specific matter.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Sat Jun 03, 2017 7:09 am**

I have been pondering the impact of this statement but have yet to go back and check it on the PVR.

*ejwalshe wrote:*

THIS LINK: *Very significant audio at the 9:57 mark: "...the bodies were moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery, a mere 300 yards from where they had first been buried."*

*Various distances from Nine Elms Military Cemetery:*

*750 yards to Grave CA 40 in depression south-east of the Old Mill*

*1,000 yards to Red Line and 2nd Objective of 16th Bn*

*300 yards north-north-east to fenced-in rectangular wood.*

The rectangular wood, if I recall correctly, is the fenced in area on the east side of the road where CA39 was located. Greg Young had a member of his team check into this site and once again, if my recollection is correct, it was fenced because they hunted game birds at that location in the past.

I am not certain if we have ever dealt seriously with the question as to whether the NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY, THELUS is CA40. We have several cases where cemeteries were moved a short



distance, some even to what they called "Extensions". In the NINE ELMS the proof is partly in the writing as during the concentrations they reported:

**CWGC wrote:**

*ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY, THELUS, on the roadside a little North of Nine Elms Cemetery. This graveyard, originally called "CA 39," contained the graves of 46 Canadian soldiers, 39 of whom belonged to the 15th Battalion, and most of whom fell on the 9th April 1917.*

We know that was the ORIGINAL ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY and not the one that now exists here ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY, ROCLINCOURT.

If we consider the same situation for NINE ELMS, the question remains whether there was an ORIGINAL Nine Elms (perhaps CA40) that later became the FINAL Nine Elms Military Cemetery?

**Note:**

As posted elsewhere this week, the CWGC (THIS LINK) has advised us that the information that is presented for the cemeteries as "**Historical Information**" is based on what was published in the CEMETERY REGISTER at the time. In that particular case, the information dated back to 1928. As such, the new information from 1934 and 1949 did not appear on the CWGC web page. It is perhaps time to ask the CWGC if they can search their archives for any original documents related to the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Those documents may have been destroyed in the London Bombings during WWII, but we won't know if we don't ask.

---

## **News Talk 770: Danielle Smith with Norm Christie in Calgary**

by **ejwalshe**

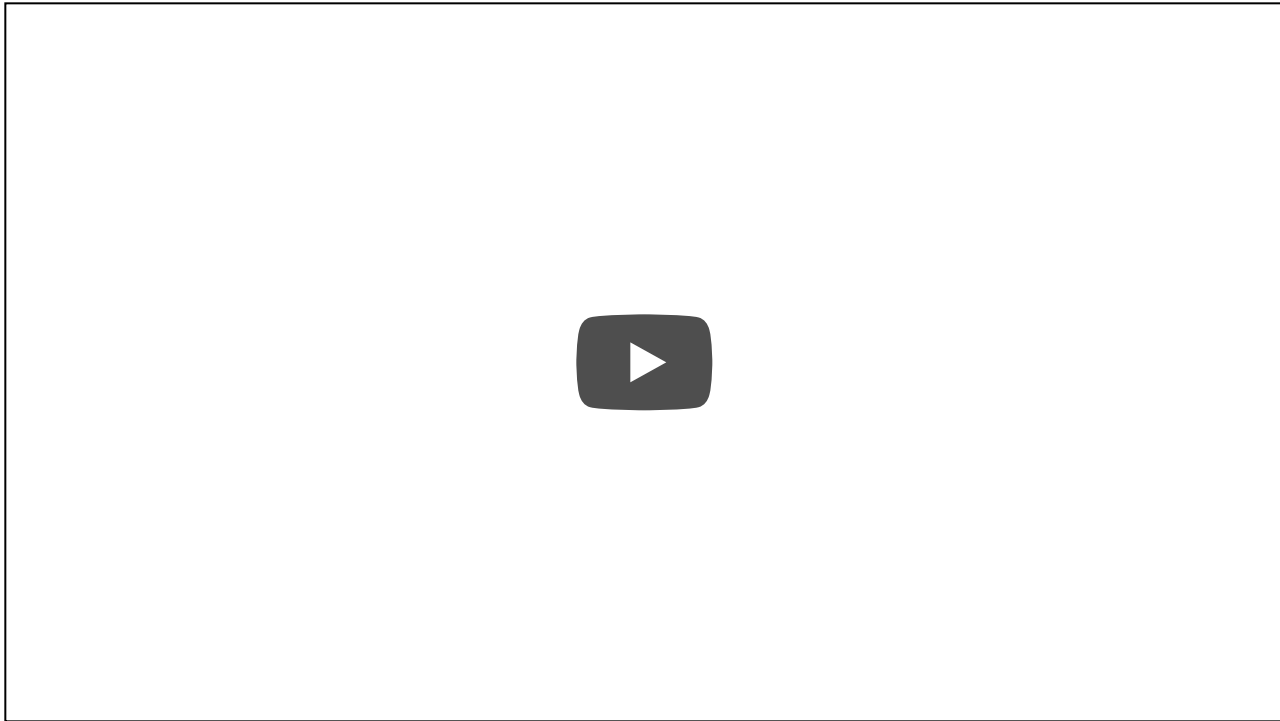
Posted: **Tue Jun 13, 2017 4:22 pm**

Skip to the 40:20 mark to find the conversation with Norm Christie this morning in Calgary.

### Danielle Smith with Norm Christie

For our non-Canadian friends, you may download the FULL SHOW-June13.mp3 file (may be slow to download - it is a big file - 110MB).

P.S. I found the 45 from Rich Little mentioned by Norm...



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 17 of 30

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jun 13, 2017 9:16 pm**

As I have some interest in the questions that surround CA.40, I was keen to hear this radio presentation.

Mr. Christie does a great job.

We can only hope that Mr. Christie will have his day.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 7:18 am**

A great interview and well worth listening to, in the context of the importance of saving Canadian history. As always, Norm does a great job on that topic.

I must admit I was somewhat shocked to hear him say that the families should sue Justin Trudeau because the Canadian government has a moral and legal responsibility to recover the men. 🙄

Norm does say again that he checked all the cemeteries and the men are not there. That leaves the question of Nine Elms Military Cemetery "hanging" as that is where the CWGC says the men are located, and my count says there are enough unknowns there to account for those men. I am not sure how Norm knows that those men are not from the 16th Battalion? I would be the first to agree with him on that point if he has that information.

I had not heard about the Betz (Betch?) widow sending her brother back to look for her husband's grave. Fascinating! I will have to listen again, as I can not find the person by that name.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 3:22 pm**

Found Private Earnest Betts:



1. NO. 736746		2. RANK OR RATING Private		3. SURNAME BETTS		4. CHRISTIAN NAME Earnest Earl	
5. UNIT OR SHIP 16th Battalion		6. DATE OF CASUALTY 9-4-17		7. R.Q. FILE NO. 649-B-15394		8. LETTER Latter	
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY "Killed in Action"				10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY Vimy Ridge				12. GRAVE LOCATION			
13. CEMETERY <i>Nine Elms Military Cemetery Memorial T 499. 1st Lt. 6 above &amp; 8 below</i>				14. GRAVE LOCATION Grave Plot Row			
15. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN				16. EXPOSURE NO.		17. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLEMENT	
18. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.							

NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.

M. P. W. 2043  
1944-12-18  
R. Q. 1773-1814  
A. L. 1944-12-18

LB

19. REPORTED LOCATION OF GRAVE.

$\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St. Vaast,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles North of Arras, France (Grave Registered).

20. REMARKS.

Approximate location Sht. 360.A.10.c.9.7.

His brother would have been Clarence Betts. The picture of them on the CVWM does not appear?

[http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembran ... rl%20Betts](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembran...rl%20Betts)

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **McTague**Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 3:47 pm**

Memorial (?????) erected to above and others

Did I see that? Can anyone make out the entire note under "Nine Elms Military Cemetery"?

I wonder if there is a headstone for this guy and could we get a picture of it?

I found this...

<https://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?p ... d=56674488>

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 4:09 pm**

Found out something new today that I did not know - never heard of it prior to some hunting today.

Let me start by marking where the CA40 main folder is located. I had not used it for a long time and had lost track of the location, as we have moved it a number of times.

F7 B1 Member Folders / CA 40 - per Norm Christie

Within that main folder there is a folder called CWGC REPORTS and then a sub-folder "5. Images Used in Report".

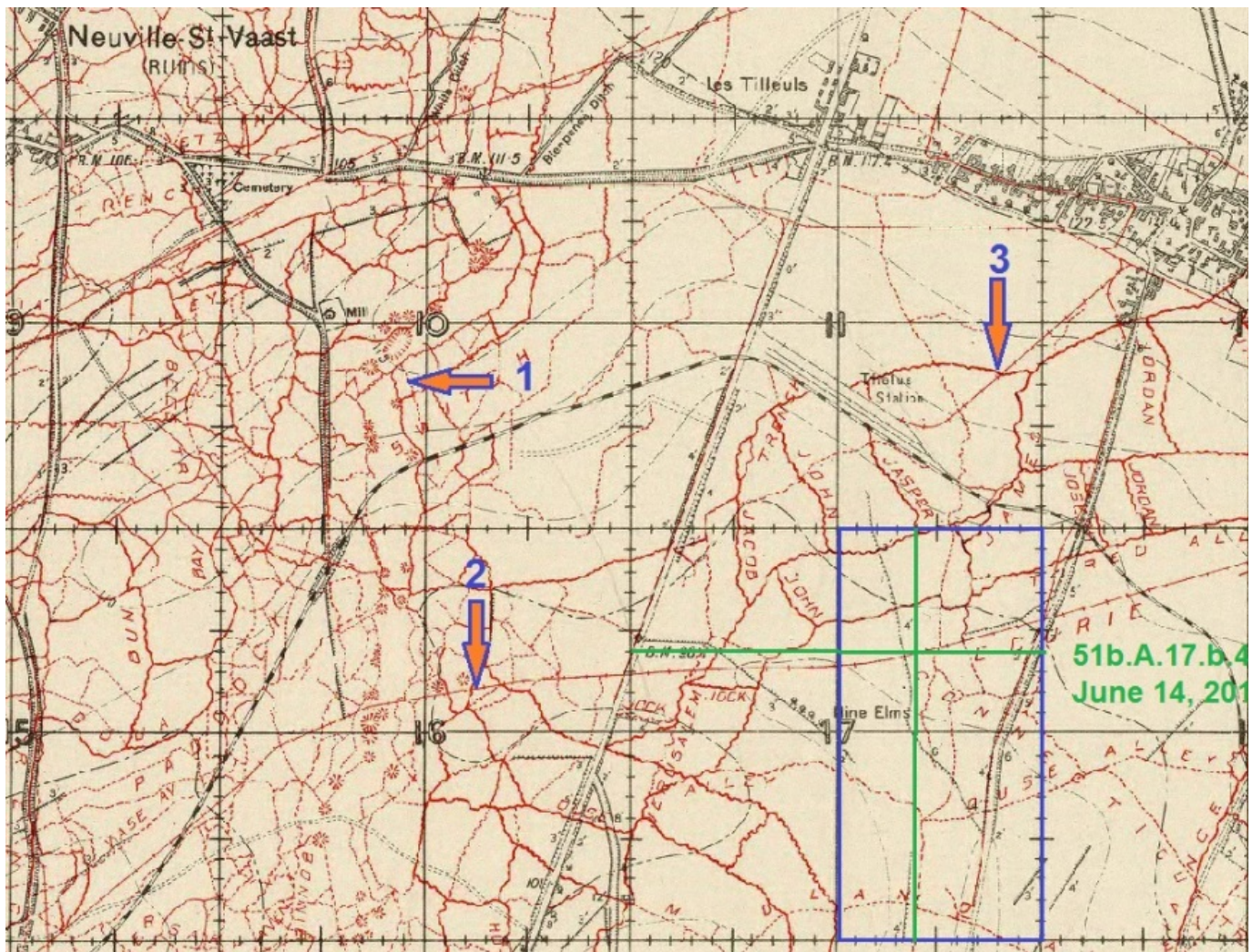
The image I wanted from there was "CA 40 Alternatives on Trench Map".

What I discovered today from the UK National Archives is that there was a "Nine Elms Trench" and that it was located with the sectors 51b.A.17.b and 51b.A.17.d which is where the Swischen Stellung passes north to south on the east side of the woods that are at **51b.A.17.a.8.2**. When I noticed that information, I had to check to see if it agreed with the CWGC description:

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

Sure enough, there is a **Light Rail Line** running through Sector A.17.b and at coordinates **51b.A.17.b.4.4** the spot is **274 metres (300 yards) west of the main road**.

Is that a mere coincidence 🤖? I don't recall that we ever looked at that area before, but it is less than 500 yards from the line of trees known as "Nine Elms".



The GPS coordinates for that are 50.3455, 2.7934 in an overpass loop on the Autoroute des Anglais. I may be confusing issues, but I think Ted had us looking at that location WAY BACK AT THE START?

You can see that area on Google Earth, east of the Nine Elms Military Cemetery and southeast of CA39.





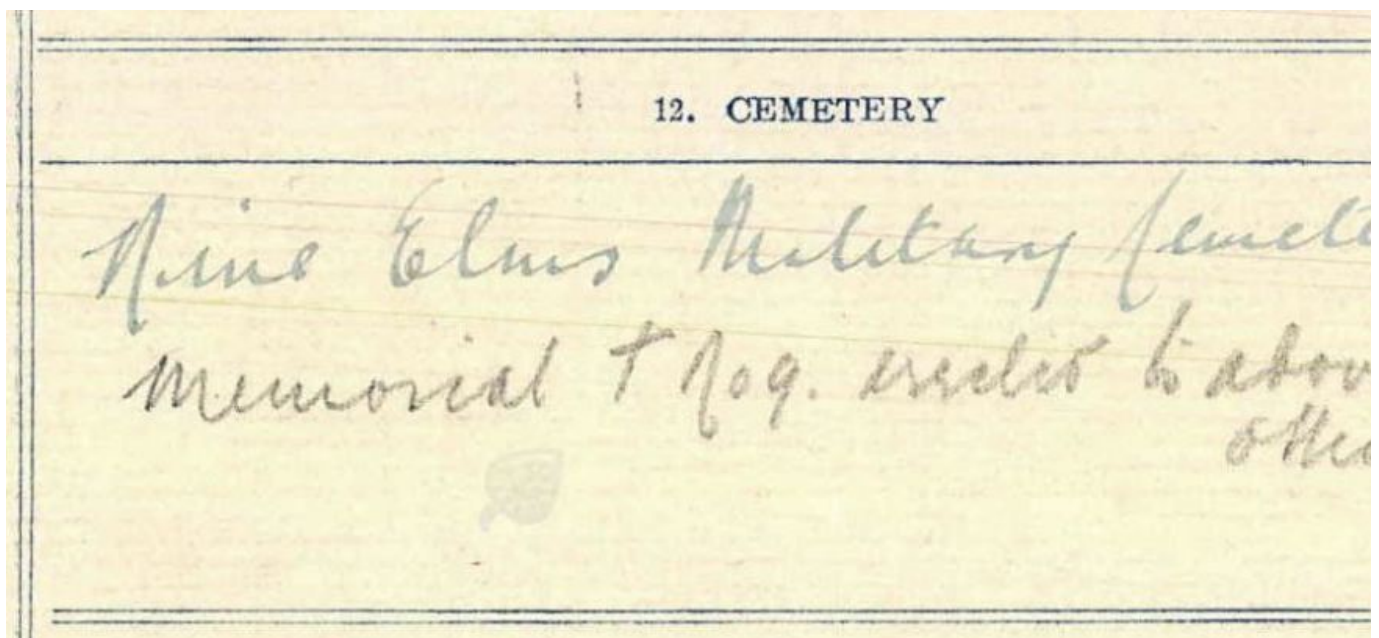
Then again, I may just be "prattling" again?

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 4:15 pm**

That refers to Memorial Cross No. 9 that was to have been put in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery before they decided to put the names on the Vimy Memorial and abandon memorials in cemeteries.



That is shown on these GRRF documents from July 1921:



COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 21/2/21.

Army Form

## GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

(This report cancels all previous reports.)

REPORT No. 54

SCHEDULE No. 68

No.1. District.

PLACE OF BURIAL:- NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Commune:- T H E L U S.

Map Reference:- Sh. 51b.A.17.a.10.75.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd
CROSS. No. 8. (Contd).					
1/4th Seaforths.	201124	DOWGILL.	Cpl. F.	9/4/17	CA R/3370 144928
do	201542	ROWLANDS.	Pte. J.R.	"	
do	202733	COMMING.	Pte. P.	"	
do	200787	EVANS.	Pte. S.M.	"	
do	200963	MCDONALD.	L/Cpl.D.	"	
CROSS. No. 9.					
16/ Can Scottish.	K29049	EYDEN.	CSM. F.S.	9/4/17	mem + 3H cm/1665 (15694B) Being Is under 3/22 5694
do	420819	ALLEN.	Pte. H.W.	"	
do	736569	ATTWOOD.	" L.M.	"	
do	625286	ARMITAGE.	" J.A.	"	
do	700410	BALL.	" E.V.	"	
do	736746	BETTS.	" E.E.	"	
do	736108	BLAIK.	L/Cpl. S.F.	"	
do	160741	BROWN.	Pte. J.M.	"	
do	718192	BAGULAY.	" F.	"	
do	871504	BONIVER.	" L.	"	
do	718661	BROWN.	" J.	"	
do	721564	CLEMONS.	" W.	"	
do	43945	BRADSHAW.	" R.E.	"	
do	258460	CURLEY.	" H.F.	"	
do	23823	CHANDLER.	L/Cpl. R.	"	
do	872090	COOPER.	Pte. J.R.	"	
do	871443	COOPER.	" F.	"	
do	160168	DICKSON.	" W.F.	"	
do	736317	GOODING.	" C.A.	"	
do	718755	GORRIE.	" J.	"	
do	722078	GLASSFORD.	" R.A.	"	
do	624801	GIBBONS.	" J.H.P.	"	
do	A 2048	HAMDILTON.	Sgt. W.	"	



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ENTERED 2014  
SLIPS CHECKED ac. 5

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 21/2/21.

Army Form

## GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

(This report cancels all previous reports.)

REPORT No. 54

SCHEDULE No. 69

No. 1. District.

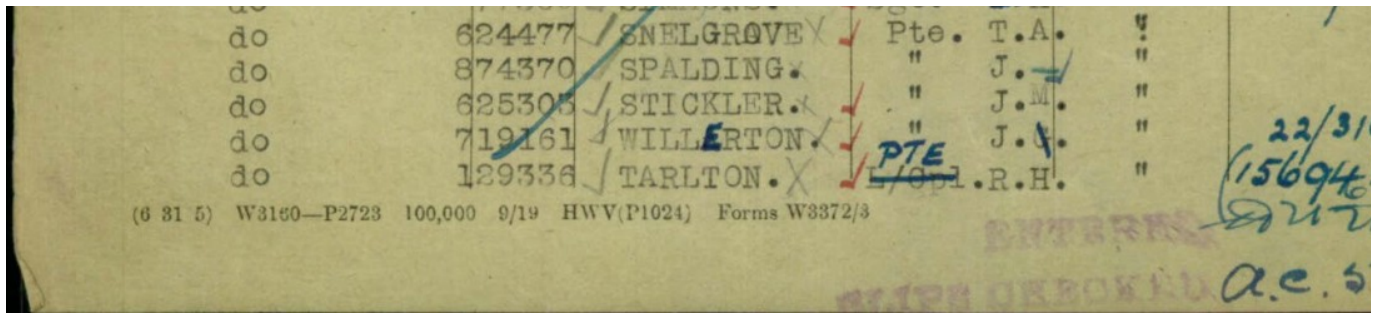
PLACE OF BURIAL :- NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Commune:- T H E L U S.

Map Reference :- Sh. 51b.A.17.a.10.75.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd
CROSS. No. 9. (Contd).					
16/ Can Scottish.	756703	HAWKINS. X	Pte. A. J.	9/4/17	
do	105644	HENDERSON. X	" W.A.	"	
do	628188	HOWIE. X	L/Cpl. J.	"	
do	736880	HOOPER. X	Pte. W.H.	"	
do	624957	HALLIDAY. X	" F.J.	"	
do	832135	KILLCUP. X	" H.L.	"	
do	715249	KIRBY. X	" A.J.	"	
do	426344	LATIMER. X	Cpl. A.	"	
do	700022	LAYCOCK. X	L/Cpl. W.W.	"	
do	736651	LEITCH. X	Pte. S.W.	"	
do	718699	MANNING. X	" F.J.	"	
do	427586	MILNE (VC) X	" W.H.	"	
do	718847	McMARTIN. X	"	"	
do	716526	McWILLIAMS. X	" H.	"	
do	736171	McCANDLESS. X	" T.	"	
do	420765	MCCOWAN. X	" D.	"	
do	625136	MCGRAY. X	" H.S.	"	
do	859684	OWEN. X	" R.	"	
do	718269	PATTISON. X	" R.	"	
do	736967	PIERCE. X	" G.B.	"	
do	105741	PHILLIPS. X	" F.V.	"	
do	624593	PARSONS. X	" A.H.	"	
do	700967	PURNELL. X	" W.	"	
do	757084	POWELL. X	" L.C.	"	
do	417984	RUD. X	" A.	"	
do	129200	RUDDOCK. X	" A.F.	"	
do	77309	STIMMONS. X	Sgt. I.H.	"	



See, it pays to prattle, as long as you can keep tack of the events!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 4:20 pm**

Great find, Richard.

So, the memorial cross was erected in the Nine Elms Cemetery but there was a decision made to put the names on the Vimy Memorial at a later date.

I think that is RIGHT where Ted figured it was in the 9th post on this thread. Obviously, the construction for the motorway and overpass may have disturbed things in this area.

According to Ted's post, there were statements about the recovery of remains right on that location.

It looks, to me, like there are just over 50 names associated with Cross No.9.

## Running out of memory

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 5:02 pm**

Don't sweat it, Richard...I think we both are running out of room in our memory for all this stuff...or we forget where we filed it.

Richard, that place under the overpass was where I was lost for six months...don't go there again, trust me, it's a red-herring. 🤔

**Richard wrote:**

I don't recall that we ever looked at that area before, but it is less than 500 yards from the line of trees known as "Nine Elms".

Now trust me again, where your arrow "No 3" is pointing is where Brad & I have been lost ever since!

Pages, upon pages of this post are all about this location...we **ARE** looking at this location, and I visited the spot last year, and pointed it out to everyone in my entourage this year, 100 years less a day from when they were buried there.

**The location has absolutely everything going for it...**1) at the 2nd Strongpoint, 2) on the battlefield of the 16th, 3) where Lt Cowan and the majority of the 44 had made it to before he fell, 4) positively fits the CWGC description of Grave CA 40, 5) is right beside the light rail which we discovered is still visible by satellite, 6) is where we will eventually find NC digging.

Pardon me, I am getting ahead of myself with 6).

I have plenty to back up my single proposed location, yet I have only been an armchair Great War



historian for four years, have yet to write a single book, have yet to have an article published, have no fan club, no funding...

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 5:09 pm**

At least you have an entourage! 😊

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 14, 2017 9:07 pm**

I can not recall (again) if we looked at all the men listed on Special Memorial 9 but it sounds familiar. I remember CSM Eyden, the first one on the list, in particular. He was later found buried in Ecoivres Military Cemetery. He was known to be in that cemetery in July 1918, so well before the memorial cross was "pulled" in 1921.

My synopsis of all of this is that there are several possible scenarios for CA40. Norm Christie has his favourite and we have presented some viable alternatives. I would suggest what separates our alternatives from Norm's is that we have done a great deal of research with **open minds**. We are NOT SAYING we know where the men are located but that there are a number of possible areas, some more likely than others.

The most recent radio interview is another example of Norm Christie not admitting that there are other alternatives. We know that he knows that we are challenging his findings, but has there ever been any mention of "not everyone agrees with my findings"? We repeat that here quite often saying "Norm might be right" but we have no proof, we have to look at all the options.

If someone can solve the biggest riddle of the Norm Christie investigations, I would be most impressed. ***Norm said he went to Nine Elms Military Cemetery and checked all the headstones and none of the men are there.*** That is not a direct quote, but I can pull the exact wording from the video. Explain that statement to me, if you can.

---

## Short Recap

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jun 15, 2017 10:01 am**

Let's not lose focus once again...this thread is very long, and has tended to meander, so I understand it is easy to get confused when you pick up this topic for the first time, or return to it after a prolonged absence.

For me, this case, and the Hallu Eight case are always on my mind, the distractions for me are all the other topics we discuss. Everything I learn about the missing men of the 16th Bn, I intend to apply to the Hallu case.

Everything changed for me back on January 16, 2016 in this thread...that's when I had my Eureka moment, and there are two posts worth recapping, the first of which is here, and the second I want you to return to the [original post](#) to read it.

***Ted on January 16, 2016 wrote:***

My New Year's Resolution came from Niels Bohr...I wanted to continue to learn from my mistakes...

***An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes which can be made in a very narrow field. - Niels Bohr***

I had the right location from the start when I first questioned Mr Christie's description of the location of Grave CA 40.

And I identified the correct light rail because I had the exact same measurement as the CWGC - 274 metres west of the main road.

Then I made the mistake - in Google Maps I followed the wrong light rail, but came up with the same exact measurement as the CWGC, once again 274 metres west of the main road....but now I was about 1,000 metres south of where I should have been, and of course, 1,000 metres south of where the 16th Battalion actually was.

I AM ABSOLUTELY THRILLED WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER THE A26, AND WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LOCATION TO INVESTIGATE.

Stay tuned...I will update this post in a couple of hours with appropriate graphics, illustrating my mistake and where the missing men of the 16th Battalion will be found.

Yes, they will be found.

Thanks to Richard's latest post on the ER Viewer - it made the difference.

Later that day, I made a much longer post with the promised graphics and the exact location: 51B.A.11.d.7.6

Please return to read this post [here](#).

P.S.: And don't miss Brad's [graphic](#) from Google Earth, providing another view of this crater/trench.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jun 15, 2017 8:55 pm**

Not losing focus Ted, if that was directed at my post. Rather I had been checking on what you had stated:

P.S.S.: Very significant audio at the 9:57 mark: "...the bodies were moved to Nine Elms Military Cemetery, a mere 300 yards from where they had first been buried."

Various distances from Nine Elms Military Cemetery:

750 yards to Grave CA 40 in depression south-east of the Old Mill  
1,000 yards to Red Line and 2nd Objective of 16th Bn  
300 yards north-north-east to fenced-in rectangular wood.

I had read before that there was a "Nine Elms Cemetery" that existed prior to the "Nine Elms Military Cemetery", so that coupled with your statement sent me back to the archives to look for any references to a prior cemetery by that name. It was during that research that I came across the "Nine Elms Trench". I found the coordinates for that trench, but alas I do not see it marked on any maps. The names on the trenches changed from the German to Canadian names in April-May 1917 but I have yet to find a trench by that name - just the coordinates.

As I understand your reply, you ended up in that location on the A26 in error - but what if that was a coincidental error? I agree that the site is due south of the site reported to the CWGC in March 2016.

That is in my post of January 18, 2016 here: [post and image link](#).

I only raise that issue now to make sure it is recorded properly, as I do not recall any prior discussion about a "Nine Elms Trench" that was SO CLOSE to the existing cemetery. It is POSSIBLE that the men may have been there, thus the reference in the CWGC statement. It is also POSSIBLE that it is absolute nonsense!

What we are doing different here from the approach of Norm Christie is presenting and evaluating all alternatives. Norm has dismissed all but his alternative. That is what separates our group and makes our presentations valid. We are not saying that ANY ONE is correct, we are presenting all the cases, INCLUDING that they may very well be in the existing Nine Elms Military Cemetery. I believe we have also always been open to the "Christie Option", regardless of whether he calls it a crater when it is a trench. We have not closed the door on any alternative, and that is what makes our case realistic.

It might turn out in the end that the site on the highway was the original site of the Nine Elms Cemetery. IF (and that is a BIG IF) that was the case, then it might have been moved to the new site or it might have been obliterated in the April-May artillery battles that followed. I wish I knew the answer, I do not. Even if it did exist, there is nothing that says it was the site of the missing men of the 16th Battalion.

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## Law of Holes

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sun Jun 18, 2017 9:44 am**







## Law of Holes

1. Holes' first law states, when you are in a hole, stop digging.
2. The second, less known law, is to fill the hole in to prevent it from becoming a hazard.
3. The third, and even more obscure law of holes states a hole not filled in will cause more damage in the future than it would cause if you took care of it now.
4. The fourth and final law of holes is a new law we must pay particular attention to - if your partner is digging a hole, and begins digging other holes before you arrive, how will you know which was the first hole he started digging? Before you answer, consider he may have returned to the first hole.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jun 18, 2017 2:33 pm**

Okay Ted, then let me dig a hole and bury myself in it. This analysis, below, is a valid attempt to do just that if I am off the mark!

For those looking at the names that were to be on the **Special Memorial Cross #9**, you can see the list within this topic. It is on a spreadsheet table and it shows who was to be on SM9 versus who was on the CA40 cross. The post is here:

Spreadsheet Analysis

If you back up from that post, you will find the basis of the analysis.

The total number of casualties on the Vimy Memorial for April 9, 1917 is **787 men**.

Of that the 3rd Infantry Brigade of the 1st Canadian Division, who were in the general area we are studying lost:

- 13th Battalion = 24
- 14th Battalion = 9
- 15th Battalion = 9
- 16th Battalion = 58 *see table below, exact same number, has to be a coincidence at 58*
- **Total 3rd Infantry Brigade = 100**

There were also 11 men of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps lost that day and on the Vimy Memorial. The ORBAT for April 9, 1919 tells us we must also account for the 3rd Trench Mortar Battery (none listed) and the 3rd Machine Gun Coy (only Sgt. Pearson #63736 - attack south west of Thelus, no record of burial). We should also include Pte. Arseneau #712446 of the 13th Coy CMGC (KIA Vimy, no record of burial) as they were attached to the 1st Division. There are none listed for the Canadian Engineers linked to the 1st Division.

That gives us a total of **102 men**. In the earlier spreadsheet analysis for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, I reported:

That analysis told us that there were 97 graves for UNKNOWNNS and 67 of those had NO UNIT affiliation, so they could be 16th Battalion graves. As such, there could be 44 men of the Canadian Scottish scattered throughout the cemetery.

In that group of 97, some of the men were identified by unit, which included:

- 13th Battalion = 0
- 14th Battalion = 6
- 15th Battalion = 2
- 16th Battalion = 4
- **Total 3rd Infantry Brigade = 12**

If I have this correct, that means that there are **90 men of the 3rd Infantry Brigade** (102 total - 12 known by unit) that are unaccounted for in the analysis of the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. If 40 of these men are still in a "CA40" grave site, then the number drops to 50 men of the 3rd Infantry Brigade. There are 67 possible locations for these 50 men in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

If we check the closest cemetery at "Arras Road Cemetery, Roclincourt" we can find that all but one (1 - 78th Battalion) killed on April 9th are from the 7th Infantry Battalion. Some others in the area where we might find 3rd Infantry Brigade men:

Zivy Crater = 0

Lichfield Crater = 2 of 16th Bn.

Thelus Military Cemetery = 1 of 16th Bn. (Pte. McInroy #466910 found at 51b.A.5.c.3.7)

Bois-Carre British Cemetery = 1 of 14th Bn. (Lance Corporal Gorringer #645058 - that is a CWGC transcription error, he was 54th Bn. - I have reported that error)

Petit-Vimy British Cemetery = 0

Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery = 0

My assumption is here that if we find "known men" of the 3rd Infantry Brigade in that cemetery then we have to check if there are also "unknown men" as well. For example, at Thelus Military Cemetery where McInroy is buried the COG-BR documents report unknowns of the CMR, 21st Bn., and 25th Bn.

There are bound to be some unknown men of the 2nd Infantry Brigade in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery as well, as shown by the high number of knowns (130). They were on the right (south) flank of the 3rd Infantry Brigade. Five (5) of the unknown graves are known to belong to the 2nd Infantry Brigade. As noted previously, the Arras Road Cemetery, Roclincourt is the most likely place for 2nd Infantry Brigade men.

Within Nine Elms Military Cemetery there are 180 known burials of 3rd Infantry Brigade men, which accounts for 34% of all burials. If we applied that statistically (instead of just lying!) then that would suggest that 23 of the 67 graves, with no unit affiliation, could realistically be 3rd Infantry Brigade men.

The logical places for the 16th Battalion men are in Sectors **51b.A.10** and **51b.A.11**, with some located in the upper sectors below, such as 51b.A.16.a,b and 51b.A.17.a,b. Back in December 2106 I looked at where the bodies were recovered and made a "black dot" sketch (see this post). The list from the spreadsheet now appears as follows:

- those known not to be 16th Battalion excluded
- those not likely to be 16th Battalion excluded
- one grave at 1.C.19 has 2 bodies so add 1 to the total
- Total is 58 possible graves for 16th Battalion men
- Total is 37 graves very likely 16th Battalion men

Keep in mind that Norm Christie stated that he went to the Nine Elms Military Cemetery to check if the missing men were there. Of course he did not find their names, they were not identified. If there likely 37 of the 40 men here and possibly as many as 58, then certainly this has to be a candidate location for the men that were marked as CA40. **If not, there are not enough 16th Battalion men to fill these 37 places plus the 40 buried in CA40 (if they are still there).**

I will have to check all these numbers AND PLEASE let me know if I you see errors in this analysis. It won't be the first time I have messed up and it certainly won't be the last. I am just trying to "prattle through the data" the best I can. There has to be an answer in these numbers!! 🤔

Plot	Row	Grave	Multi	P16?	Location
1	B	12		*	n/a
1	C	4			51b.A.16.a.9.9
1	C	5			51b.A.16.b.3.8
1	C	6		*	51b.A.10.d.2.4
1	C	7		*	51b.A.10.d.0.0
1	C	10		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41
1	C	11		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41
1	C	13			51b.A.17.a.9.0
1	C	14			51b.A.17.a.9.0
1	C	19	dual		51b.A.17.c.8.7
1	C	28			51b.A.17.b.6.0
1	C	34		*	51b.A.11.d.2.9
1	D	10			51b.A.16.X.70.45
1	D	11			51b.A.16.c.6.4
1	D	12			51b.A.16.c.6.4
1	D	13			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	14			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	15			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	16			51b.A.16.b.9.3
1	D	17			51b.A.16.c.4.7
1	D	20			51b.A.16.b.1.1



1	D	21			CA1 51b.A.16.d.3.4
1	D	40			CA24 51b.A.16.d.3.4
1	E	7		*	51b.A.10.d.3.5
1	E	8		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	9		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	10		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	11		*	57b.A.10.a.2.8
1	G	7			51b.A.16.b.1.9
1	G	8			51b.A.16.b.1.9
1	G	9		*	51b.A.10.d.2.0
1	G	10		*	51b.A.10.d.2.0
1	G	14		*	51b.A.10.c.6.3
1	G	17		*	51b.A.10.65.01
1	G	18		*	51b.A.10.65.01
1	G	19			51b.A.16.c.8.7
1	G	22		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	23		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	27		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	31		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	32		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	33		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	34		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	35		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	36			51b.A.16.b.1.0
1	G	37		*	51b.A.10.d.2.6
1	G	38		*	51b.A.10.d.2.6
1	G	40		*	?
3	C	2		*	51b.A.11.b.2.0
3	C	3		*	51b.A.11.b.25.90
3	C	6		*	51b.A.11.a.9.9
4	C	9		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	C	10		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	D	11		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	4		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	6		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	10		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	17		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
		58		37	TOTALS ROW

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sun Jun 18, 2017 7:25 pm**

There are several stones that appear to be still unturned:

Surviving papers of officers (principally) who were in the Canadian Corps GRU.

As yet unidentified or unconserved moving picture films held by LAC.

They are apparently doing little if anything to conserve, or at least make available the latter, and if the past behaviour of similar institutions is any guide, the preferred approach seems to be to sit on the material until it becomes so unstable it is beyond use, and then destroy it.

Something ought to be done about that, and if anyone wanted to start a fund-raising campaign this year or next, I would say that would be very good use of money raised.

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Page **17** of **30**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 18 of 30

by **McTague**

Posted: **Mon Jun 19, 2017 10:19 am**

If one has had a look over the various war diaries for the units that were in action (through the black line and on to the red line, just south of Thelus) on April 9, 1917 one can see the 1st Divisional Burial Officer was named as Lieut. C. B. Adams.

I looked for him in the LAC database but I don't feel that I actually found him.

I wondered if he left any materials behind...a diary? I guess we'll never know that.

I also wondered over the timeline at the grave that would be known as CA.40. Was it opened in advance of the actions of April 9th in anticipation of need? That would seem to be more of a possibility if we accept its location as more westward around the Claudot craters. If we accept the location as more to the east (even a bit beyond the black line) we should probably think of it in terms of an impromptu device the 13th Battalion used after the difficulties that the 16th Battalion encountered at the strong points near the red line.

Was it still open on April 10th or even after that? Was the light railway there already or have we an assurance that it was constructed after the success of the attack was achieved?

Obviously, it may have been a section of a trench, or a shell or mine crater, that was deemed suitable for any number of reasons at a time of great stress and need.

I think "crunching the numbers" could be a big part of gaining perspective and I endorse Richard's approach on that.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **15thBnCEF**

Posted: **Mon Jun 19, 2017 11:03 am**

While researching period documents for our Project work that was identifying the location for CA35 and the 15th Battalion's Vimy cross, we ran across the reference to the 1st Div Burial Officer you mention as Lt CB Adams. However, the 3rd Brigade War Diary Annexes mention a Lt MacAdams as being the officer responsible for establishing two burial locations - one east and one west of the Arras-Lille Road.

LAC files show only one officer with the last name MacAdams - Capt J.M. MacAdams

A quick check of that service file shows a Capt J.M. MacAdams, 14th Bn, who was attached to 3rd Brigade HQ at the time of Vimy. Now he was attached in the position of Bombing Officer but the Bde War Diary clearly shows him as tasked to locate burial locations on 10 April 1917.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Mon Jun 19, 2017 2:13 pm**



Looked for any traces of Capt. Johnston Mitchell MacAdams. His military file mentions a connection to Sarnia, Ontario. I found this entry in the Toronto Star, June 12, 1920, pg 25: "J. M. MacAdams of the Sarnia Chamber of Commerce". (Session of the International Joint Waterways Commission held in London, Ont. MacAdams supports proposal to deepen the St. Lawrence River so that ocean going vessels may be able to sail from the Atlantic to great lake ports.)

Looking online for Sarnia history, the name Johnston Mitchell MacAdams does come up again in Sarnia after the war (link to document). Question remains - did he write about his war experiences and does anything remain behind today? Diary? Any records in Sarnia?

This document indicates that he was the brother of Roberta MacAdams, well known in politics (Alberta Legislature). The Canadian Magazine. Dec. 1917 From that source: ""Miss Roberta Catherine MacAdams is the third daughter of Mr. Robert MacAdams, formerly editor of The Sarnia Canadian...One of her brothers, Captain Johnston M. MacAdams, is, like herself, on active service. He went overseas with the 34th Battalion and has been for two years in France. He is now attached to the Third Brigade headquarters."

This would make the family quite well known, and possibly there is something to be found in archives for her family. More family history.

Another interesting piece of information - perhaps more to be found in the Sarnia Observer. This was quoted in an excellent piece of research - The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project (2014), pg. 39:

Sarnia Observer, November 1918:

"An interesting souvenir of the recent advance in France has reached Sarnia in the form of a letter under the seal of the French City Valenciennes, addressed to **Capt. Johnston MacAdams**, conveying the thanks of the municipality in connection with an incident which took place when the city fell into the hands of the Canadians. A large part of the fine civic collection of art had been left behind by the Germans, and was found to be exposed to the elements through the damage done by shell fire to the civic buildings. The Sarnia officer took prompt action, and with the assistance of a party of soldiers, work on the roof was commenced and rapidly completed, and other prompt steps taken to preserve the treasures of art from further damage. The letter was accompanied by a memento from the city which will doubtless be held in permanent regard by Capt. MacAdams as a remembrance. The letter was signed; F. Billiete, L'Adjoint Faisant Fonctions de Maire de Valenciennes, Valenciennes, France."

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **JonathanS**

Posted: **Mon Jun 19, 2017 2:38 pm**

Debbie Marshall's *Give Your Other Vote to the Sister* (2007) suggests MacAdams papers exist, possibly in several different collections.

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## Chief Inspector Clouseau

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Jun 19, 2017 3:24 pm**

Awesome detective work, Marika & Jonathan....there may be exactly what we are looking for in his papers...more than a little excited at the prospect.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

**15thBnCEF wrote:**

the 3rd Brigade War Diary Annexes mention a Lt MacAdams as being the officer responsible for establishing two burial locations - one east and one west of the Arras-Lille Road.

There is considerable importance to the location that Greg mentioned in his post above. The Arras-Lille road is the one that originates in the northwest quadrant of Arras and passes between Erurie and Roclincourt, northeast through Les Tilleuils, then on to Vimy, Lens and Lille.

That road crosses through **51b.A.17.a** and then **51b.A.11.c** and **51b.A.11.a**, in the vicinity of the areas where CA40 was most likely located.

It is says that the burial grounds were sequential, so it would be logical that CA40 followed CA39 (the original ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY). The burial 1st Division (CA) ground CA39 was in the wooded area, now fenced, on the east side of the Main Road (**50.3479, 2.7862**), north of the existing NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY. If that was the cemetery on the east side of the road, then CA40 should be on the west side of the road. The alternative is that the reference site was the 15th Battalion burial ground at CA35 at **51b.A.16.a.9.8**.

There was confusion in the initial days of research as to whether the CWGC reference to the following:

*Other special memorials record the names of 44 Canadian Soldiers and ten from the United Kingdom, buried in other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.*

We later confirmed that reference was to CA39 and not CA35, thus explaining how the 15th Battalion Vimy Cross survived and the 44 men were lost. The reference document for that is GRRF 2617976 for Special Memorial Cross 13, which states:

*To the memory of these 44 Canadian Soldiers, killed in Action in 1917, and buried at that time in ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY which was destroyed in later battles.*

That ruled out CA35, as well as CA40, which coincidentally also referred to 44 Canadian Soldiers.

One of the descriptors that we can not rely on is the location of a burial ground that many of the COD and E-13 files refer to as either:

- 1/2 mile southeast of Neuville St.Vaast, 3 3/4 miles north of Arras
- 1/2 mile southwest of Thelus, 3 1/2 miles north of Arras

This was revealed when we discovered that Private McNicol #718887 and Private Lacroix #805420, buried side-by-side in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery (1.D.1 and 1.D.2) had those two descriptors and both were exhumed from **51b.A.11.d.2.3**. That grid reference is approximately 1,000 yards (0.6 miles) southwest of Thelus but more that 2,000 yards (1.2 miles) southeast of Neuville St.Vaast.

The importance of that is clear when you evaluate where some say CA40 was located and compare that to the remains that were exhumed and are known to be buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. These descriptors were confused by the GRU (or others), resulting in men buried in CA6 at **51b.A.11.d.2.3** (50.3492,2.7920) being recorded as buried in CA40 at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** (50.3507, 2.7771).

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**Give Your Other Vote to the Sister: A Woman's Journey...**

by **ejwalshe**Posted: **Tue Jun 20, 2017 1:58 pm**

Should have hit me like a Mack truck, only realizing now this was authored by our friend Debbie Marshall.

I just contacted Debbie to see what kind of research she came across regarding Captain Johnston MacAdams.

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**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **rlaughton**Posted: **Tue Jun 20, 2017 8:11 pm**

Okay, so here is the proof.

Private McNicol buried in Nine Elms Military Cemetery but reported buried in CA40. This is not new information, it dates back to our research and report in March 2016.

Case closed - CA40 men are in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

FORM E13 1054-10M-16-11-16.			
NUMBER	718887	RANK	Pte.
NAME	Mc NICOL. W. S. <i>6498</i>		
UNIT	16th. Battalion.	NEXT-OF-KIN	<i>Mrs C. Mc Nicol</i>
FILE No. R.L.	<i>25-101-14861</i> <i>Rollin</i> <i>Man.</i>		
DATE OF DEATH		CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
9-4-17.		KILLED in ACTION.	
DATE OF BURIAL		PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
<i>Exhumation</i>		<i>Grave No C.A. 40.</i>	
<i>Burial Rpt by G.R.C.</i>		<i>Loc. A. 10. C. 9. 7.</i>	<i>Authority on R.L. 26. 7a.</i>
<i>Nine Elms Military Cemetery Thelus</i>		<i>36 C. A. 10. C. 9. 7.</i>	<i>BR/2248/DGR</i>
<i>3 miles N of Arras</i>		<i>Reconnaissance - 51 B.</i>	
<i>Plot 1. Row L. Gr 3</i>		<i>A. H. d. 23.</i>	<i>BR 1976/DGR 8</i>
<i>BR/21176.</i>		<i>Burial Report by G.R.C.</i>	
		<i>1/2 mile S.E. of Newville</i>	
		<i>St. Vaast. 3 1/2 miles</i>	
		<i>N. of Arras.</i>	<i>BR/2284/DGR 8.</i>

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by Broznitsky

Posted: Tue Jun 20, 2017 10:05 pm

### *raughton wrote:*

Private McNicol buried in Nine Elms Military Cemetery but reported buried in CA40.

The document seems very specific as to the exact location in CA40. Then exhumed and placed in 9 Elms.

Is this it?



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Tue Jun 20, 2017 10:42 pm**

The Concentration of Graves record for McNicol (doc2618029) shows he was found at 51b.a11.d.2.3 and that he was buried in Nine Elms with 6 others who were found in that same location (51b.a11.d.2.3).

There is no mention of CA40 on the COG record, however if you examine the COG record the soldier found above him at the same location (unknown soldier, 5th Can Bn) a GRU2 was also recovered and a note indicating it was cemetery CA6, not CA40. I suppose it's possible there could be two cemeteries at the same location - CA6 and CA40.

If McNicol was in CA40 as the record you provided above notes for McNicol, why was there only one soldier from the 16th recovered from that location at the time? The exhumation team should have been 40 bodies at the same location as they would have likely been a trench or crater grave. There should have been over 40 bodies there and in close proximity to McNicol, so should have been recovered and moved at the same time. Or perhaps the rest of the soldiers were moved earlier (and not documented?) to a cemetery and McNicol was somehow missed until a subsequent pass of the area?

It also doesn't explain why the GRU cross would be found at 51b.a.10.c.9.7 (as reported in the Lieven Concentration of Graves records and also the location of CA40 as listed on everyone in CA40's COD) with the name of one of those soldiers (Owens) who's known to be in CA40. If the cemetery CA40 was actually at 51b.a11.d.2.3 (or any location other than 51b.a.10.c.9.7) that's a long way for a Cross to have been moved accidentally and a whopping coincidence that it was found years later at the exact location that was recorded on everyone buried in CA40's cause of death register. To me this is the largest and most compelling evidence that the reported location of CA40 is not a mistake (Occams' Razor - simplest solution is that the originally reported location is the correct location).

To me there's still a discrepancy in location and number of bodies found. Case still open?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 12:11 am**

Great discussion.

Part of the reason why I suspect that the soldiers are at Nine Elms Cemetery relates to record keeping. If I recall correctly, the soldiers were buried by the 13th Battalion. The soldiers were placed into a mass graves on April 10th during a most trying and difficult time. It was important to clear the battalion quickly before it affected the moral of the soldiers in the area.

When they buried the bodies, It was doubtful that they accurately identified the bodies or created a method for identifying them if they were ever exhumed. The concentration of graves, and exhumation, was done after the war. The goal on April 10th was to get the bodies into the ground as soon as possible.

It is my contention that the bodies did not have any reliable identification when buried or exhumed and therefore were not individually identified as the soldiers of the 16th Battalion. Burial and exhumation companies suffered from tremendous stress and it is understandable if they did not aggressively try to identify any found bodies.

This theory is independent of the actual location of CA40.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 6:53 am**

The COD and E-13 records noted in this post are viewable in this folder:

[https://www.mediafire.com/folder/wtccpz ... E-13\\_Files](https://www.mediafire.com/folder/wtccpz...E-13_Files)

To clarify my point about the "case closed", that is the error that I referred to in the prior post in response to Greg's mention of the locations.

I don't think there is any chance that McNicol was in CA40, no matter where that burial ground was located. Errors were being made, particularly in the copying of almost identical information from one record to another. I had previously missed the error that originates from the confusion between a battlefield grave that was described as being southwest of Thelus and one that was southeast of Neuville St. Vaast.

McNicol was buried southwest of Thelus but they erred when they wrote southeast of Neuville St. Vaast on his E-13 record. To this day, I am not sure we know when E-13 cards (the War Grave Registers) were made versus COD file records (Circumstance of Death or Circumstance of Casualty). It appears that the COG-BR was completed in April-May 1919 and the next of kin was notified in December 1920 and again in March 1922. The McNicol documents suggest that the E-13 notices were filed as early as 28 September 1917 (notice of battlefield grave site) and the exhumation report followed on 1 December 1921. That record may hold the clue to the dates, as it notes that the "Circumstances of Death (detailed)" were filed on 25 October 1917. The typed version of the COD already has the reference to burial at Nine Elms, so that had to be completed after the E-13, or alternatively there were written (preliminary) COD files in existence prior to the typed versions we reference.

You will see that if you check the files for Meddie Doucette #713122 in 1.D.5 that he is correctly reported as buried southwest of Thelus.

It is my belief that a great number of E-13 forms were completed in error that showed that the men were buried in a spot, then called CA40, which at the time had a description of southeast of Neuville St. Vaast at map coordinates 51b.A.10.c.9.7. McNicol is the proof that such an error occurred. The error was copied over-and-over again, from file to file because they did not notice that some were southeast of Neuville St. Vaast and some were southwest of Thelus.

If this is true, then any file that refers to CA40 has to be questioned. It would be interesting to look at the handwriting on the E-13 WGR files to see if they were all completed by the same person.

This error means that anyone who had that reference to CA40 may be buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

As always, we are discussing alternatives. I don't think anyone can say "yet" what exactly happened. We just need to keep an open mind and consider all the options.

*p.s. I agree with both Brad and Chris, in part. On the question of the cross found with Owen's, we don't know if there were 4 or 40 names on that cross. Remember the cross in the documentary was not real, it was reported as computer generated. The Lievin document (see it [here](#)) only states that a broken cross was found over the grave of the above 4 soldiers. There is no mention of 40 or 44 soldiers. Remember Robert Owen is on the Vimy Memorial, as they had no idea if one of the four sets of remains belonged to Owen.*

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **HamiltonS**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 8:47 am**

A bit late to the thread but earlier reference to Capt. Johnston Mitchell MacAdams, “of the 14th Bn.” prompted me to refer to my copy of the 14th Bn. History. There he is mentioned three times. The first reference is on page 165, which summarizes Battalion Operation Order No. 151, issued 10:40 p.m. on July 24th 1917 is preparation for the Bn’s supporting role in the Battle for Hill 70. Section 18 dealing with “Carrying Platoons” has this to say:-

“Carrying Platoons:- The attacking battalions will be reinforced by the following platoons for carrying purposes:-

15th Battalion - 2 platoon of No. 2 Coy.

13th Battalion - 1 platoon of No. 1 Coy.

16th Battalion - 1 platoon of No. 1 Coy.

These platoons will work under the Brigade Grenade Officer, **Lieut. J. M. MacAdams**, and will assemble in Reserve Trench.”

The next two references to this officer are in the lists of Honours and Awards received.

“Capt. J. M. MacAdams - Mentioned in Despatches” (pg. 312), and

“Capt. L. M. MacAdams - Croix De Guerre (French)” (pg. 313).

The Certificate of Service in his digitized file lists the numerous units with which he served and notes his awards:

Mention in Despatches - LG#30448, 28-12-17;

Croix De Guerre - LG#31688, 15-12-19.

Cheers, Hamilton

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 11:45 am**

***vimyboy wrote:***

Great discussion.

Part of the reason why I suspect that the soldiers are at Nine Elms Cemetery relates to record keeping. If I recall correctly, the soldiers were buried by the 13th Battalion. The soldiers were placed into a mass graves on April 10th during a most trying and difficult time. It was important to clear the battalion quickly before it affected the moral of the soldiers in the area.

When they buried the bodies, It was doubtful that they accurately identified the bodies or created a method for identifying them if they were ever exhumed. The concentration of graves, and exhumation, was done after the war. The goal on April 10th was to get the bodies into the ground as soon as possible.

*It is my contention that the bodies did not have any reliable identification when buried or exhumed and therefore were not individually identified as the soldiers of the 16th Battalion. Burial and exhumation companies suffered from tremendous stress and it is understandable if they did not aggressively try to identify any found bodies.*

This theory is independent of the actual location of CA40.

Surely these men had as many identifiers as any other regular casualty? Except perhaps those on special details like raids where personal and unit identification was sometimes removed before the operation began.

I personally don't believe the dead would have been tipped into a hole without any record being kept of at least their units and number of dead. The battlefield memorials we have photos of don't support that: name, rank, number and formation or as much information as could be found would be recorded unless it was a shallow grave, rifle marker type situation.

I hope someone can turn up something from the Adams papers. Maps were often kept by officers...

Other G.R.U. officers, especially those more senior would also be worth checking; who knows what else might turn up!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 2:55 pm**

OK...I'm trying to help but there has been an awful lot of really good work done here already.

Richard, some perusal of the E13 forms has me thinking that I am seeing the same handwriting over and over.

Something in this caught my attention...

REF. MAP. FRANCE 51.B.1/40,000.

### CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

### Burial Return.

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial NINE ELMS

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	Was cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	C	4	A.16.a.9.9.	No.	Nil.	No.
1	C	5	A.16.b.3.8.	Yes	UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER. 446342 Pte. D.W. Jett, 14th Canadian Bn. Killed in Action 51.N.W.1.A.16.D.38.	No.
	C	6	A.10.d.2.4.	No.	Nil.	No.
	C	7	A.10.d.00.00.	No.	Nil.	No.
1	C	8	A.17.c.0.47.	Yes	G.R.U. 772016 Pte. P. Balfour. 1st Canadian Bn. Killed in Action 9/4/17.	No.
1	C	9	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	G.R.U.2. Canadian Corps. 719914 Pte. A. King. 16th Canadian Bn. Killed in Action. 51.N.W.1.A.11.c.2.4.	No.
1	C	10	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	Unknown Canadian Soldier.	No.
1	C	11	A.10.d.2.41.	Yes	Unknown Canadian Soldier.	No.

First Army Press, A.P. & S.

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

I'm not sure I'm reading this correctly but for Pte. A. King (I looked for him at LAC but his number didn't turn up) it almost looks like he was recorded as KIA at 51b (NW1) A.11c.2.4 but his body was found and exhumed at A.10.d.2.41.

Does that imply that he was moved WEST for burial? I don't have a date of death.



**RED HERRING ALERT:** There is **ONLY 1** soldier with the surname "King" in Nine Elms Military Cemetery! That would seem to be Elburn King, #210490 who was KIA on April 9, 1917 as a member of the 3rd Battalion. So, he was **NOT** with the 16th Canadian Scottish. **BUT** did he migrate west for burial?

---

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Page **18** of **30**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Private Aleksei Rud #417984 Plot I Row C Grave 9

Page 19 of 30

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jun 21, 2017 3:24 pm**

Strange....

Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Plot I Row C Grave 9 today contains Private Aleksei Rud #417984

Indeed, what became of this mysterious Private A King with apparently non-existent Service Number 719914?

Note that Plot I Row C Grave 8 has been correctly identified as Private P.A. Balfour #772016, and...

Plot I Row C Grave 10 is still today, an UCS.

Toughie...there are no King's of the 16th Bn who died in 1917 at all.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 1:02 am**

In réponse to Rob's comment.

In my opinion, the bodies were "tipped" into a mass grave and the identification, if available, was collected and therefore was documented. However, the burial was in a mass grave and the individual identification of each soldier upon exhumation may have been difficult if not impossible. The only reasonable solution would be to move them to Nine Elms as "unidentified."

At the time of the Vimy battle, the soldiers had to assume that the graves were going to be their final resting place. The concentration of graves was conceived after the war. Therefore, the soldiers created the memorial crosses and decoration, i.e. stones, etc, to commemorate their comrades.

As I have stated before, I believe the soldiers to be Nine Elms Cemetery and they have not been identified because of the above or because of lost or poor paperwork, or both.

---

### Best Location for GPR Survey

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 12:45 pm**

You got me thinking, Brad...

I believe we all know the limitations of GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) in this region due to the chalky substrate...utterly useless if the men were buried in a mine crater 6 meters deep.

GPR just doesn't work that well here below say, six feet...I believe this is exactly what is mentioned in one of NC's videos.

With this in mind (six feet)...there is one place where GPR is the best, most suitable, and most likely method to produce the results we seek.

**Hints/Bonus:** it is a place where we do not have to worry about UXO, as it was cleared long ago, and we don't need a permit, nor authorization.

You know the place!

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 1:17 pm**

A cemetery? Nine Elms?

I wish, but they put I-beams under the headstones for support.



*Blackberry Post*

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 1:21 pm**

And there are 8 (not 9 - that bugs me!) large elms on the site with a huge root system that show up as large anomalies as well there.

The radar worked well in Nine Elms when I collected some there but didn't find any anomalies save tree roots outside the marked graves.

---

## Concrete beams

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 1:43 pm**

Don't worry about the concrete beams, they are directly under the stones, perhaps a foot or two from the remains.

Collected **some**? I don't understand why you would not have thoroughly investigated the cemetery. 😞

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 2:38 pm**

I think I might be a little confused. I have not gone back and looked through the thread but what would a GPR in Nine Elms accomplish?

Help!

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 3:02 pm**

I am thinking 44 bodies in a neat little row with no Duhallow block nearby.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 3:15 pm**

The purpose of the GPR was to see what a trench cemetery would look like on the GPR in a similar setting to CA40.

We surveyed only some of the cemetery as the objective at the time wasn't to see if the CA40 troops were there. The area we didn't survey was the older French section of the cemetery if memory serves.

40 bodies in a trench (assuming similar to the trench that's there from same time range) would be an area 3x10m which isn't small to hide in a cemetery so compact.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 4:39 pm**

Chris:

Tell me more about what you did, where you did it and the results. We have been interested in a GPR study of Nine Elms for some time.

Did you do:

1. In front of the 15th Battalion memorial row?
2. The south boundary along the fence line?

You are now talking about what we had suggested more than a year ago. Looking at "the alternatives" in a cooperative manner. Can you give us information or is this a secret?

Thanks,

Richard

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 5:13 pm**

We covered both those areas.

Our work was done in January 2016.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 6:44 pm**

And the tests revealed that .....

And you can download the report here .....

We share everything here.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **transparentearth**

Posted: **Thu Jun 22, 2017 9:07 pm**

There's no report (reports cost money and in this case wasn't necessary).

I hate to be repetitive but I can't share the data from the investigation as it's property of the production. It probably would not be helpful even if I did as you wouldn't have the commercial software to read and interpret the data.

I'm trying to help your investigations how I can - I don't think it serves the soldiers to be chasing false leads so chime in when I can to try and help but continue to get push back every time - if you'd rather I will stop posting/replying but I think that doesn't serve the best interests of the soldiers and their families.



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Fri Jun 23, 2017 10:28 am**

transparentearth;

Everyone is welcome to post their thoughts but please be expected to be challenged. We post our thoughts (i.e. leads) for discussion and hope they will be challenged. Expect "push backs." That is how an investigation works. You have knowledge and expertise that is of value to our discussion and we welcome your input, especially if it refutes or supports our theories.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Fri Jun 23, 2017 11:38 am**

As a moderator and dilettante of this topic, it appears to be operating on the peer review concept, in which a person presents data or theories and others analyze same to help "bunk or debunk" the theory.

I don't think anybody here is out to "win" the battle and be given an Order of Canada, unlike some . . .

All most want to do is to locate the final resting place of lost Canadians.

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Page **19** of **30**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 20 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 6:58 am**

*rlaughton [url=<http://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?p=99567#p99567>]22-01-2016[/url] wrote:*

Checking the files of the men of the 60th Battalion that went down in 1916 is also important, as their exhumation (2618041) shows they were found very close to the A.10 site at **51b.A.10.c.9.5** (as compared to c.9.7). If you check the records for Major Thorne, Lieutenant Punnett and Private Compton, you will find they were buried in a "trench / shell hole combination" at the end of the Bentata Trench. This is more or less the area where the 16th Battalion came onto No Mans Land on April 9, 1917. That is close to a crater but it is clearly different than the crater northwest of the proposed A.10 burial site at A.10.c.9.7 (that crater is at A.10.c.7.8 ).

Apparently I never posted the COD and E-13 files for the six (6) men of the 60th Battalion that were killed and buried by a shell on November 26, 1916 at the location where CA40 was thought to have existed. I have now put all their pages in this shared folder for easy viewing, as I needed them to update the list of exhumation locations for the CA-CD battalion burial sites. There is no reference to that shell hole in the trench dugout being called CA40 in 1916.

1916 60th Battalion Men

They are on GRRF 2617919 and 2617920 (where Moir is incorrectly shown as 10th Battalion).

The best description is on the card for Private Moir:

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN
123698	Private	MOIR	William S
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	
60th Battalion	26-11-16	649-M-13370	Pres
8. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
<p>"KILLED IN ACTION."</p> <p>On the afternoon of November 26th, 1916, one of our heavy trench mortars was firing on the enemy lines South East of Neuville St. Vaast. One shell fell very short landing on top of the dugout used by "A" Company as their headquarters and in which were three Officers and seven other ranks of whom Private Moir was one. The shell destroyed the dugout killing and burying Private Moir and four others.</p>			
10. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15.
Nine Elms Cemetery.	3 miles North of Arras, France.	Grave _____ Plot _____ Row _____	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIES	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

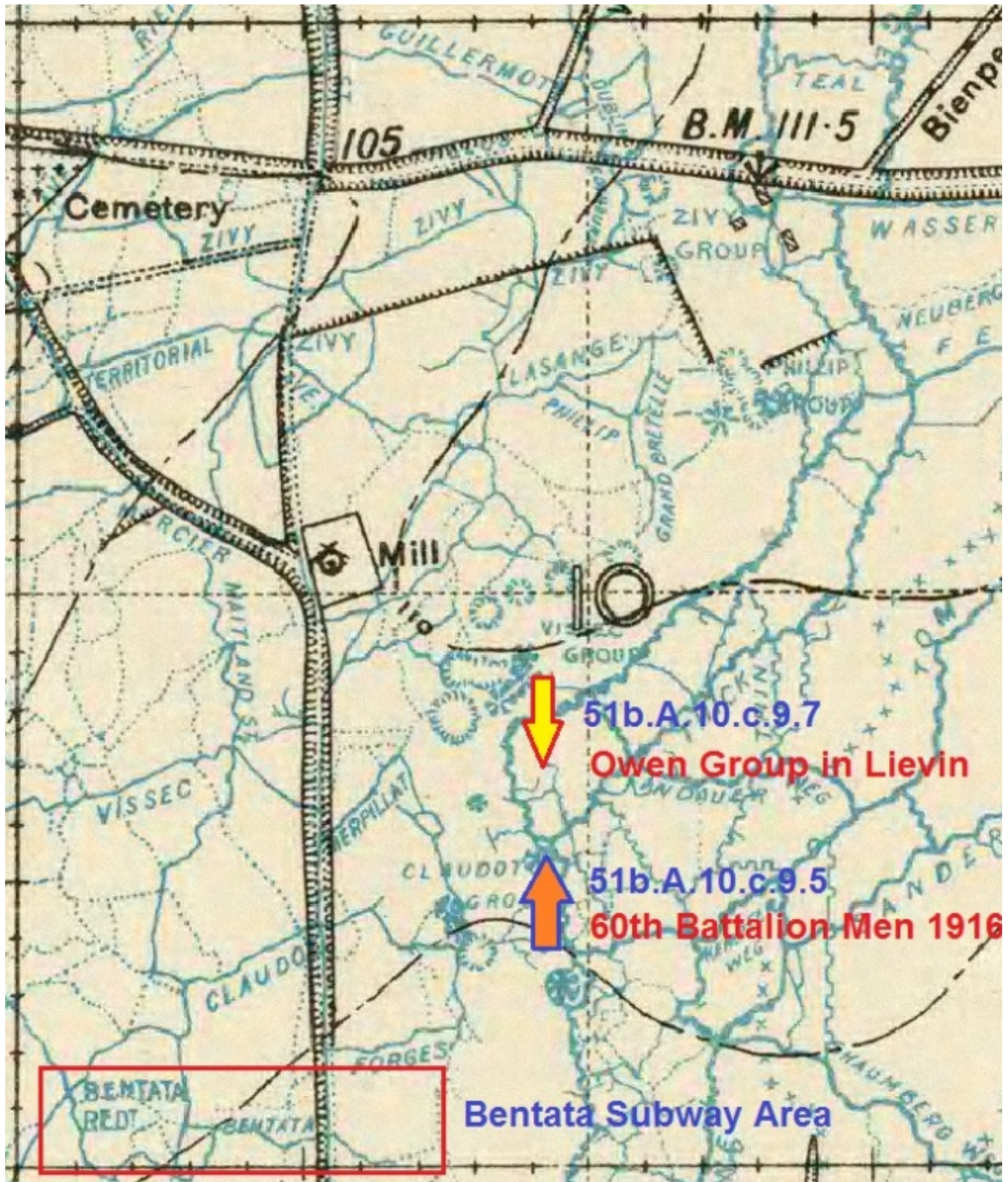
## 20. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

Exhumed from opposite left end of Bentata Trench.

## 21. REMARKS.

I have marked on a trench map snip where the 4 men found and buried in Lievin were exhumed versus the 6 men of the 60th Battalion. There were no other group exhumations recorded in that location that I have recorded to date, but I am still looking.





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 9:25 am**

This one is interesting...



332-128-38

NUMBER..... RANK..... UNIT..... NAME..... PUNNETT H.G.  
 UNIT..... 60th Battn..... NEXT-OF-KIN:.....  
 FILE NO. R.L. 9-P-248  
 D.G.R. & E. Ref.

Punnett  
Thornicroft  
Daphne  
Gerard

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
26-11-16	Killed in Action	

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
Memorial Cross erected in	Burial Report by G.R.C.:- Ecoivres Military Cemetery - 13 1/4 miles N.W. of Marsuic. 5 1/4 miles N.W. of Arras.	Buried in front line trench left end of Bentata Trench  Authority on BR/538/10-4.
	Burial report by G.R.C.:- In a shell hole 3 3/4 miles N. of Arras	BR/6268
	Burial Report by G.R.C.:- Nine Elms Military Cemetery, 3 miles N. of Arras. P1 RE G18 Cem	Exhumation 10/10/11

It's a bit rich with almost too much information...buried in a front line trench...a shell hole...memorial cross erected at Ecoivres Military Cemetery...buried in Nine Elms Military Cemetery...goodness me, what to think?

Sad to think that friendly fire did them in.

I see that, on Brownlee's card, it relates that he is in Plot I, row E, grave 15 in Nine Elms Military Cemetery but..."This man's name also appears on a memorial cross erected near Plot 4, row K, grave 1 of Ecoivres Military Cemetery"

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by rlaughton

Posted: Sat Jun 24, 2017 10:29 am



That memorial cross was removed when they were later exhumed. Glad you mentioned that, as I see there is a different reference on that page to 51b.A.10.c.73.05 versu 51b.A.10.c.9.5. On the surface it does seem like a significant difference, but there are so many appearing now that it sheds some doubt on the accuracy of the readings at t=1 and t=2.

Perhaps it is to do to the moon's gravity pull 🤪 ?

13/2/18. Army Form

FIRST ARMY. GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

~~SECRET~~ REPORT No. 3. SCHEDULE No. 43

Commune: MOUL ST. ELOY. COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.

PLACE OF BURIAL Ecoivres Military Cemetery.

Map ref. Sheet 51c. F.14.a.4.9.8

Land belongs to This cancels Schedule No. 64 of previous R

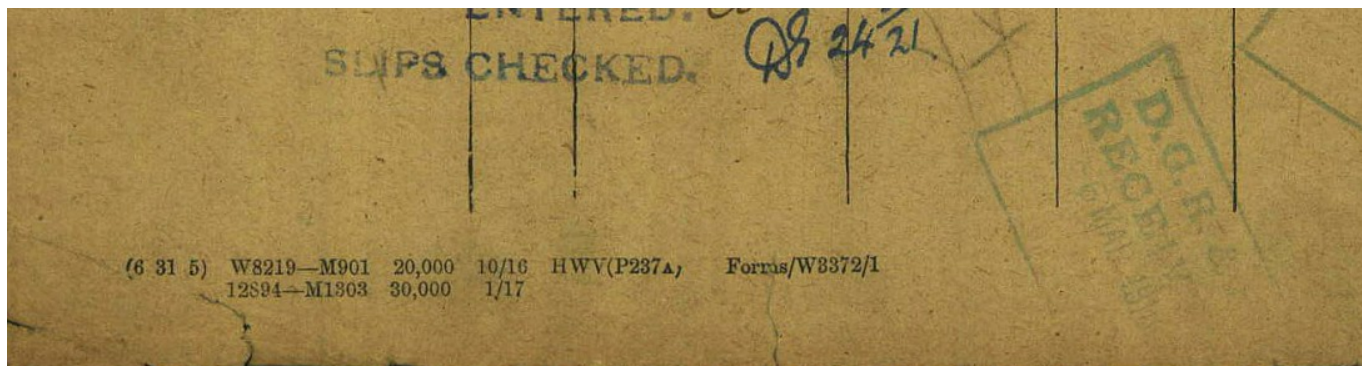
The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erect or Despatch
IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS & MEN OF THE 60th CANADIAN BATTALION KILLED IN THE H.Q. DUG-OUT OF A. COY. ON NOVEMBER 26th 1916 AND BURIED IN THE FRONT LINE OPPOSITE THE LEFT END OF BENTATA TRENCH AT Sheet 51b. A.10.c.73.05.					
		Major S. L. THORNE			
		Lieut. H.G. PUNNET			
	457229	Pte. W.F.T. GODBEER.			
	139515	Pte. G. BROWNLEE			
	123698	Pte. W. MOIR.			
	201344	Pte. H. COMPTON.			

The graves of the abovenamed Officers and Men are reported  
First Army Serial No. 1058.

1 23-3-18

ENTERED



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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 10:45 am**

I actually consider the difference in position to be significant: the 10.c.73.05 position is clearly at the end of the Bentata tunnel and a ways off from where the boys from the 16th Battalion took their first fire, between the Vissec (10.c.87.85) and Claudot (10.c.92.54) craters.

If that rings true, it casts doubt that there might have been "stacked" bodies in a shell hole or crater.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 11:33 am**

I was pondering, after endorsing a "number crunching" approach to the CA.40 question, if anyone had taken a backward approach to this concept?

If one reads the War Diary of the 16th Battalion entry for April 13, 1917, there are some numbers stated that I feel could be considered at least somewhat reliable, if not absolutely so...



16th Battalion. "THE CANADIAN SCOTTISH."

**WAR DIARY** Sheet 4.

Army I

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**  
(Erase heading not required.)

*Original*

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
	1917. April.		MAJOR R.O. BELL-IRVING, M.C., COMMANDING.
MAISON BLANCHE.	11th		Battalion rest at MAISON BLANCHE.
do	12th		do
do	13th		Battalion partially refitted in Fighting Equipment. Revised Casualty report for April 9th, is now as follows:- Killed - All ranks 72, Wounded All Ranks - 235, Died of Wounds - All Ranks 7, Missing - All ranks 19. Total - 333.
do	14th	5.20 a.m.	Battalion moves up to EISNER KREUZ WEG, in Support Area position, relieving 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion. Trench Strength - 577 All ranks.
SUPPORT.	15th	6.00 p.m.	Battalion moves forward to advanced area, relieving the 8th Canadian Infantry Battalion, "90th WINNIPEG RIFLES", in the new front line position. Battalion Headquarters located at B.3.d.6.4 (Ref. Map. WILLERVAL. 1/20,000).
FRONT LINE.	16th		Enemy shell village of WILLERVAL continuously with "Whizzbangs". Situation otherwise normal.
do	17th		Situation unchanged and Casualties slight.
do	18th	9.00 p.m.	Special Patrol went out and reconnoitred Enemy Front positions and Wire, returning with valuable information.
do	19th		Battalion moves down to FARBUS WOOD.
FARBUS WOOD.	20th		Enemy shells FARBUS WOOD continuously. We have a few casualties.
do	21st		Battalion moves to old original British Support Lines. Battalion Headquarters located in VASE Trench.
VASE TRENCH AREA	22nd.		Battalion rested today. Pay Parades in morning and afternoon. Draft of 54 O.R., reinforcements joined Battalion.
do	23rd		Battalion rested. Pay Parades completed.
do	24th		Battalion rested.
do	25th		do
do	26th		do

2353 Wt. W2544/1454 700,000 5/15 D.D. & L. A.D.S.S./Forms/C. 2118.

This would have been written after the 16th had retired to Maison Blanche so I think we can have some assurance that there had been time taken to consider the figures given in the war diary.

If one accepts that there were 72 dead: all ranks, it is conceivable that that number would need to have been buried. We are concerned with where any burials of these men took place and I wonder if we can find them?

The memorial cross that seems to have been erected for CB.3 and CB.10 struck me as outstandingly odd in that, if it is to be believed, it seems to list a lot of soldiers from the 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade...



**CONCENT**

**BURIAL RETURN.**

Name of Cemetery of Reburial **NINE ELMS British Cemetery. Sheet 51b. A.17.a.10.75.**

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Wern
					<b>MEMORIAL CROSS.</b>		
					(In Memory of the u/m. Canadian Soldiers who fell in Action 10th. April, 1917 and are buried at this spot.		
					C.B.3 THELUS 51b. A.10. b.95.95.		
					C.B.10 " 51b. A.11. a.7.6.		
					Cross removed from 51b.A.11.a.7.6.		
					414509 Sgt.A.Oliver. 15th.Cans. ✓	15-4-17.	
					Kennedy. L/Cpl. 16th.Can.Bn. ✓	15-4-17.	
					160741 Pte.J.M.Brown. do. ✓	15-4-17.	
					758206 Pte.J.Harvie. do. ✓	17-4-17.	
					29287 Sgt.Maj.T.Middlemas.do. ✓	18-4-17.	
					625156 Pte.McGray. do. ✓	15-4-17.	
					Unknown. do. ✓	15-4-17.	
					756486 Pte.C.B.Searle. do. ✓	15-4-17.	
					412204 Pte.A.Clark 16th.Cans. ✓	9-4-17.	
					769580 Pte.S.Heard. do. ✓	9-4-17.	
					769139 Pte.A.E.Rowland.do. ✓	9-4-17.	
					176571 Pte.T.Mitchell. do. ✓	9-4-17.	
					156755 Pte.G.H.Thompson. do. ✓	9-4-17.	
					125304 Pte.W.Nelson. do. ✓	10-4-17.	
					195459 Pte.R.B.Hawkins. 19th.Cans. ✓	10-4-17.	
					21362 Pte.J.M.Makoney. do. ✓	22-4-17.	
					213268 Pte.T.Hughes. do. ✓	9-4-17.	
					882526 L/Cpl.C.A.Jorden or Gorden. 20th.Cans. ✓	10-4-17.	

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial O

S256. W.L.WITHER.H.P. 6348. 200,000(-). 6/19. S.O.F.R.4

If I am not mistaken, I see one soldier from the 13th Battalion and 7 others from the 16th.

This caught my attention insofar as it "knocks" the notion that any "Battalion Cemetery" or the "B" in a CB.3 would necessarily exclude inclusions from another battalion or Division.

Unfortunately it mixes things up a bit but it may account for 7 soldiers of the 16th who fell on April 9, 1917.

Unfortunately, the quality of the information breaks down if one cannot be positive about which body was buried where. I found the locations to be a bit surprising. CB.3 seems to be north of the Neuville St. Vaast/Les Tilleuls Road and CB.10 is just east of Thelus proper, where the Eisner Kreuz Weg runs into Tape Trench.

If 7 men of the 16th have been found (one is an UNKNOWN) where are the others? Where might 44 of the 16th have needed to be put in one grave? At the craters (early in the day) or over on the east side of the Arras/Les Tilleuls Road?

Oh, I checked on James Marion Brown, #160741 and he was a soldier in the 16th and is reported KIA on April 9, 1917. Was he buried on the 15th of April?

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 2:04 pm**

Tim:

I am not sure I grasp your question. There were 94 dead from the 16th Battalion by the end of day 9 April 1917, according to the CWGC list.

My Nine Elms spreadsheet shows ALL the burials and the coordinates, for the known and the unknown. Is that what you are looking for? It is colour coded by Divisional Burial ground.

[http://www.mediafire.com/file/5cp71603j ... ew%29.xlsx](http://www.mediafire.com/file/5cp71603j...ew%29.xlsx)

The A, B, C, D as I understand the process relates to which Divisional Burial Officer was charged with constructing the cemetery, not just who is buried there. A number of British are in many of them as well.

The list I am making of them all (so tell me if you find more) is here:

[viewtopic.php?p=107754#p107754](http://viewtopic.php?p=107754#p107754)

I do not know why they put CB3 and CB10 on the same list. We would need to look at each card to separate them. I had looked at Rowland (2618062) of the 18th before and he was in CB10, based on the exhumation location, but that is not on his COD file.

Memorial Crosses were not always in the cemeteries where the men were buried or would eventually be buried, then they took them all down when the Vimy Memorial was initiated. Where they could, they returned the crosses to the battalions (i.e. the 15th Battalion Cross), so others may still exist as well.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sat Jun 24, 2017 5:04 pm**

Sorry for not explaining what I was aiming for.

The CA.40 position seems to have two main qualifications and one secondary one; it should have the remains of 44 soldiers of the 16th Battalion (I guess any number of others who are not specific to any battalion or division?) and should be 300 yards west of a "main" road, by a light rail track. I guess it should also have only soldiers, from the 16th, who fell on April 9, 1917, but that seems a bit tight, to me...but let's go with it, for now.

I thought that if we could tally up numbers we actually can determine that that could tell us something about which side of the Arras/Les Tilleuls Road was the most likely to have the 44 unknowns men as a block, then the whole thing would be much less of a "coin toss".

I think I was toiling under the false assumption that Battalion Cemeteries would only have members of that battalion within them. I also had assumed that the "A" and "B" descriptors would also mean that inclusions would only be from the respective divisions...I guess my assumptions were entertained to facilitate my approach.

So I was trying for quantitative analysis from that side, rather than inside the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

But I got screwed up because, down here in the US, we don't count in the metric system. That happens a lot: I wanted to buy a nice Gewurtztraminer to serve with curry but the label said chill to 3 degrees centigrade and my fridge only cools in Fahrenheit! 😊

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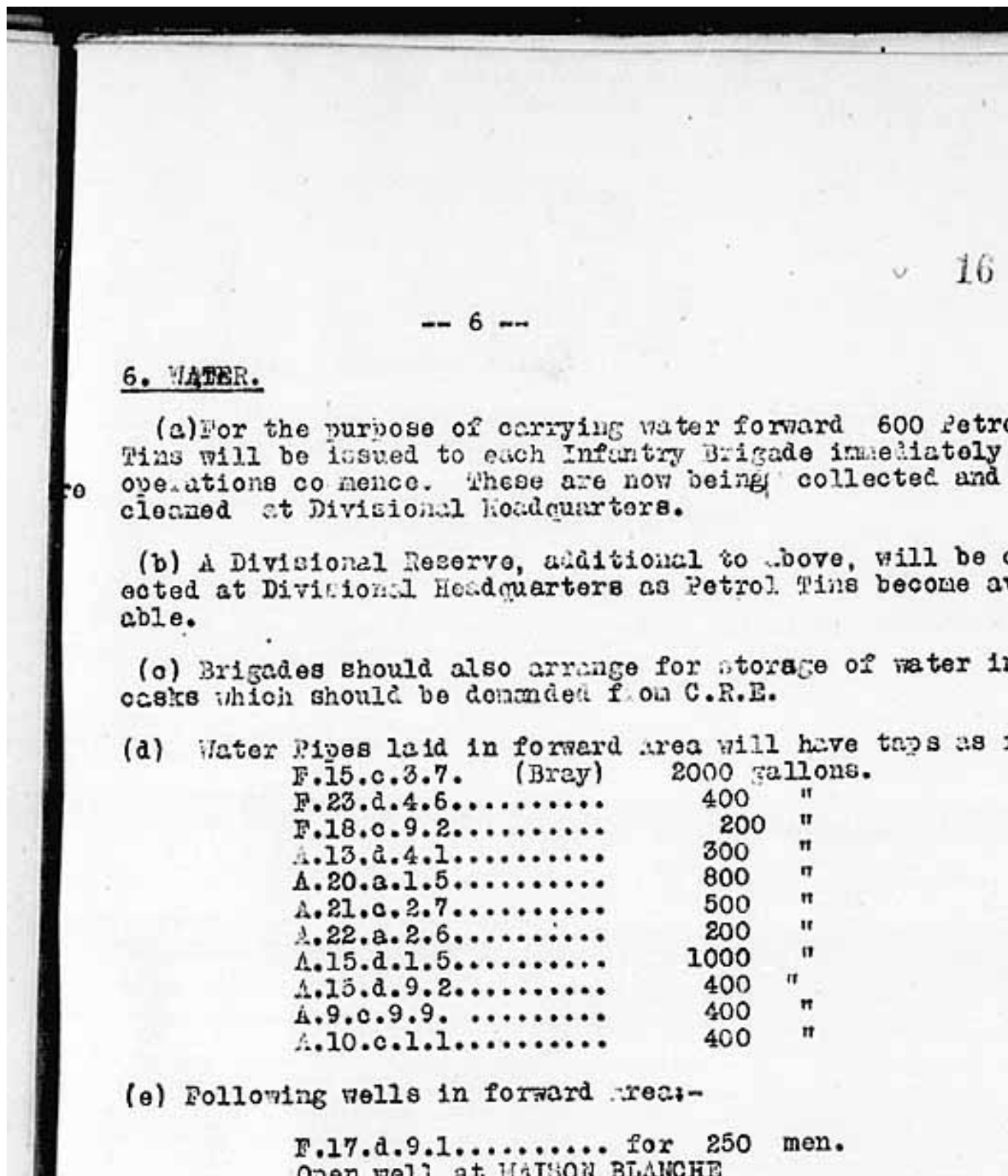
## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**Posted: **Sun Jun 25, 2017 12:10 am**

To what does "First Army Serial No.1058" refer?

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **McTague**Posted: **Mon Jun 26, 2017 4:26 pm**

Maybe good to have a look here...1st Canadian Division - Administrative Branches of the Staff

<http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/netac ... l&r=67&f=G>

Well and Pump at GLASGOW: 400 gallons.  
Well and Pump A.15.d.central.

### 7. CLEARING BATTLEFIELD.

Instructions for the clearing of the Battlefield will be issued in a separate paper.

The following matters must be considered by Brigades:

- (a) Evacuation of Prisoners of War.
- (b) Burial of the dead - both our own and enemy - in conjunction with the Divisional Burial Officer, Lieut. Adams of the 1st Battalion.
- (c) Evacuation of the wounded.
- (d) Salvaging of all guns, arms, equipment, ammunition, Grenades, etc., both British and German.

### 8. ADVANCE OF 1ST LINE TRANSPORT, TRAIN, FIELD COMPANIES AND FIELD AMBULANCES.

(a) As soon as the tactical situation permits the 1st Line Transport of Infantry, the Divisional Train, the Field Companies and the Field Ambulances will move forward to the BRUNELUT FARM - FOND DE VASE.

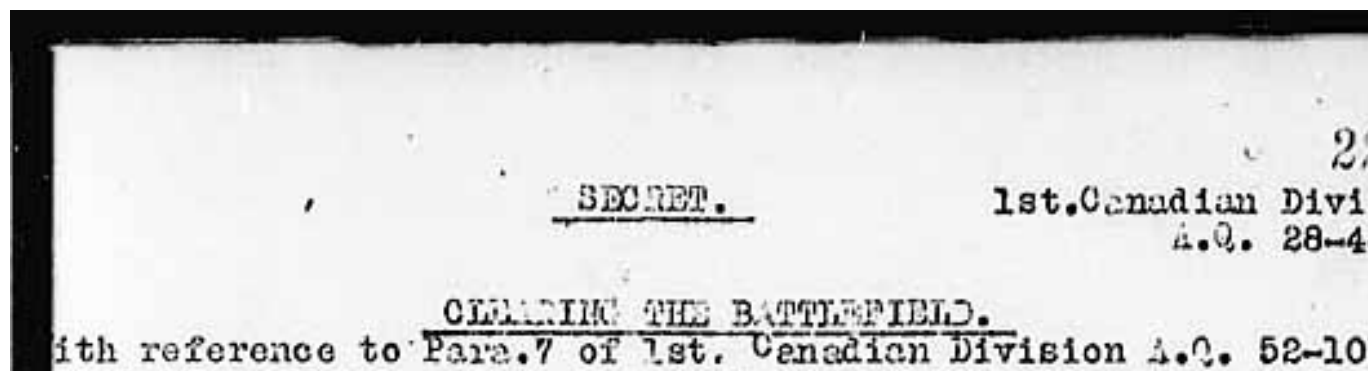
Lt. C. B. Adams, 1st Battalion...burial officer?

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/m...umber=1299>

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by McTague

Posted: Mon Jun 26, 2017 4:32 pm





ated 17th. March, 1917, the following instructions are issued in the guidance of all concerned:-

#### 1. SALVAGE.

(a). Rifles, both British and German, German S.A.A., German and British Bombs, Steel Helmets, etc., should be collected by Units into Dumps. If possible the Brigades should then collect salvaged articles into Brigade dumps as near the tram line as possible. Information of these Dumps should be forwarded to Divisional Salvage Officer and repeated to 1st. Canadian Division "Q" Staff.

(b). German Machine Guns, Trench Mortars, Field Guns or other Guns should be evacuated through the Ordnance. Captured Machine Guns and Light Trench Mortars should be brought out by Units and a report sent by Brigades to 1st. Canadian Division of numbers captured and brought out.

Location of captured Field or Heavy Guns, Heavy and Medium Trench Mortars should be communicated to 1st. Canadian Division "Q".

This information is important so that it can be included early in the Communiqués.

(c). All claims by Units for captured German material trophies should be made in writing to Divisional Headquarters (C.R.O.1879:1901)

(d). British damaged Machine Guns should be returned to Ordnance.

#### BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

(a). The Divisional Burial Officer is Lt. C.B. Adams, Canadian Battalion. He will act in conjunction with Corps Burial Officer (Capt. Grainger.), Graves Registration Unit No.2. HOUDAL

Each Brigade will provide a detail of 20 men as ordered by 1st. Canadian Division A.S. 52-93 of 7th. March 1917, who will not be withdrawn from their Units except during operations.

(b). In the event of a Division being withdrawn after the Divisional Burial Officer and such party as is necessary will remain to complete the burial of the Divisional and German dead.

(c). Too much importance cannot be laid upon for the speedy and speedy burial of the dead from the stand-point of decoration and morale.

(d). Medical Stretchers must not be used but special stretchers which are now being constructed by the C.R.E.

(e). The burial Officer is responsible for the marking of the Graves, collection of personal effects of the dead and return of the necessary returns.

#### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DIVL. BURIAL OFFICER AND DIVISIONAL SALVAGE OFFICER.

(a). The tentative duty of the Divisional Burial Officer is the burial of the dead - his next duty is to help Units in collecting articles of Arms, Ammunition and equipment on the Battlefield.

These should be collected into Dumps and the Divisional Salvage Officer informed.

(b). The Divisional Salvage Officer is responsible for

vacuation of salvaged articles through the proper channel.  
 He should keep in close touch with the burial Office.  
 Salvaged Petrol Tins (damaged or un-damaged.) sh  
 o sent to the Divisional Petrol Tin reserve at the Coal Dump  
 .12.C., Doovres-Acq Road.

Sgd. J.Sutherland Brown  
 Lieut. Colonel.  
 A.A. & Q.M.G.

divl Hqs.  
 8.3.17.

To all concerned.

Capt. Granger...

[http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/m ... ber=426292](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/m...ber=426292)

His service file...

[http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op= ... B3721-S003](http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=...B3721-S003)

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by McTague

Posted: Tue Jun 27, 2017 11:41 am

OPERATION ORDER NO. 94, (Amended.)

PAGE 5.

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EQUIPMENT  
Continued.

19. Sandbags - Five, carried across the back.  
 Teels - Four picks and twelve shovels per platoon.  
 The six carrying platoons will not carry Mills Gre  
 Ground Flares, sandbags or teels.  
 Packs will be disposed of according to arrangement  
 be notified later.

BURIAL PARTY.

20. The 13th Battalion is responsible for the burial o  
 dead between EISNER KREUZ WEG and OLD BRITISH FRON  
 LIEUT. J.L. ATKINSON is detailed to supervise the c  
 ing of the Battlefield in the above area.  
 He will report at Battalion Headquarters before da

and will work in conjunction with, and under the  
of the Divisional Burial Officer, (LIEUT. C.B. ADAMS

# SALVAGE.

21. For the collection of arms and equipment all of th  
found in the area between the EISNER KREUZ WEG and  
OLD GERMAN FRONT LINE will be dumped at the juncti  
of CLAUDOT and BENTATA with the OLD BRITISH FRONT  
For this purpose, parties of ten other ranks each  
"B" and "D" Companies and one officer from "D" Com  
to take charge, will be detailed. These parties w  
work back from EISNER KREUZ WEG.

ACKNOWLEDGE.

*Blair*

Lieut. & Adjt.  
For O/C. 13th Canadian Batt  
THE ROYAL HIGHLANDERS OF CA

Issued at  
April, 1917.

Copy No. 1-O.C.

2-A Coy

3-B "

4-C "

5-D "

6-JHQ, (Int. Off.)

7-3rd Can. Inf. Bde.

8-Office

9-War Diary

10- " " ✓

11- " "

12- " "

*J.W.M.*

Lt. John Littledale Atkinson's service file...

[http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op= ... B0290-S005](http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=...B0290-S005)

## 13th Battalion Lt C.B. MacAdams and Lt J.L. Atkinson

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 12:06 pm**

Heading in a good direction, Tim...significant burial must have produced some correspondence from these men (Lt C.B. MacAdams and Lt J.L. Atkinson)...still trying to get a hold of Sheila Gormley, will have to ask her if she ran across anything from Lt J.L. Atkinson as well).

Full text of The 13th Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada, 1914-1919.

Surely, sometime after the war, they must have been informed, or became aware of these missing men and one can only imagine the heartbreak they felt. It fills me with sadness just thinking of how these two men must have reacted to the news.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 12:56 pm**

I am looking for that, Ted.

If there is never outrage or disappointment expressed...maybe that means there was some consensus that these men were never lost...or whatever the chain of circumstance was, there was no reason to feel that anything overly errant had happened.

I would like to know what the Vimy Pilgrims felt about this issue when they went back in 1936.

---

## 13th Bn Clearance Burials completed before dusk April 10

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 3:10 pm**

*The 13th Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada 1914-1919 wrote:*

Burial and salvage parties were busy all this time and the clearing of the battlefield, so far as the area allotted to the 13th was concerned, was completed during the day.

---

## 500 Crater - April 10, 1917

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 3:23 pm**

I want to know everything about this "500 Crater"

*13th Battalion War Diary April 10th wrote:*

We also supplied several Working Parties during the day including - 1 Officer and 50 Other Ranks at 500 Crater and 175 Other Ranks at LILLE ARRAS Road...

What else would they be doing besides burying the 3rd C.I.B. at these two locations?

Spidey-sense is tingling big time!



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 21 of 30

by **McTague**

Posted: Tue Jun 27, 2017 4:29 pm

Lots of road building to enable forward movement of artillery...

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY			11/17/18 13th Canadian Battalion, Army THE ROYAL HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA
Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages will be prepared in manuscript.			Confidential . Page 7.
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
H.Q. Neuberger Haus.	April 10th		The 13th Canadian Battalion continued with the work of consolidating ZWOLFER WEG and extending the left flank. Burying and Salvage Parties were detailed from each Company, and the clearing of the Battlefield practically completed. We also supplied several Working Parties during the day including- 1 Officer and 50 Other Ranks at 500 CRATER, and three Officers and 175 Other Ranks at LILLE ARRAS Road. These parties were used for road making to enable the Artillery to bring forward their guns, and exceptionally good reports were forwarded by the Artillery and Engineers on the work done. The weather was very bad the whole day, several snow-storms and an exceptional high N.W. wind being prevalent. The men however, did not mind this so much, for we had brought the Cooks up the night before, and they were all able to obtain Hot Meals. The Battalion moved from NEUBERGER HAUS at about 5.00 pm to a position in the Old British Front Line Trench, with Headquarters at POST DE LILLE. Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding the different Dug-outs, etc., to be used as Billets, owing to the terrible damage which had been done by the shell fire during the attack, for miles nothing could be seen but shell holes and damaged wire, trenches etc., The trenches which were left more or less intact were nearly all flooded with water and deep with mud, even under these conditions the men were glad to reach their destinations, and have a chance of getting their equipment off.
Post de Lille.	April 11th		The weather in the morning was cold and dull, but it remained fair till about 3.00 pm, when it commenced to rain heavily, and a thick mist came down. During the morning the men were kept busy cleaning up equipments, etc., and improvising themselves with suitable shelters against the elements, in many cases digging in or contriving to make such bivouacs as they could out of the limited amount of material at their disposal. Working Parties were also busy throughout the whole of the day, being employed on the work of clearing the Salvage Area allotted to the 13th Battalion. (See attached map of Salvage Area). All the material in the way of equipment possible being collected and taken to the Battalion Dumps to be repaired as far as possible for further use. In the afternoon all the details and the proportion of men, left back in Reserve at the Trench Lines at BOIS DES ALLEUX, paraded in Battle Order, on the field outside the huts, and proceeded via MONT ST ELOI, ARRAS Road, to Road Junction F. 29.a.4.2. thence via CORDUROY Road to MAISO BLANCHE, where guides were met who guided the men to their respective Companies. The Battalion Headquarters was situated at LILLE POST (Location A.15.d.9.1.) and the Companies occupied dug-outs, between there and the LENS-ARRAS Road.

2449 Wt. W14957/M90 750,000 1/16 J.B.C. & A. Forms/C.2118/12.

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **laughton**

Posted: Tue Jun 27, 2017 4:33 pm

500 Crater was on my DVD:

51b.A.16.c.7.4

On the trench map it looks to me to be 51b.A.16.c.5.5 but I have seen that before, this is a 1917 trench map and they do vary by year.

It is about 600 yards west of the Main Road and 600 yards south of Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

I think we have looked in that area as a possible CA40 site.

---

## Private Claude Henry Albert near 500 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 5:05 pm**

Thanks Richard...spidey-sense no longer tingling...sadly. 😞

Both locations you mention are too far south...700 meters from the 16th Battlefield.

Had run across this entry at Canadian Great War Project for Private Claude Henry Albert - 10th Bn.

*Canadian Great War Project wrote:*

Instantly killed by enemy shell fire in No Man's Land, near 500 Crater, during the attack on April 9th, 1917, at about 5.30 A.M.

Same reason why NC's location for CA40 is all wrong...too far from where the 16th men fell (he has never tried to explain how this could be possible, other than the misstatement that the missing men were cut-down as they left the trenches...sure some were, but not 44 men and not the men we know...like Lt Cowan who made it to the 2nd Strongpoint).

Ya win some, ya lose some...time to get back up and get back at 'er.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 9:33 pm**

Perhaps one needn't generate a fake cross for the 16th's losses on April 9, 1917...





Here are some close-ups of the copper plate that was affixed to the cross, to commemorate those that fell...provided by our own 2ndCMR...



A20019	CSM	EYDEN	F. S.	736206	PTE HARVIE	J.
29257		MIDDLEMASS	T.	832135	... KILLCUP	H. L.
A20819	PTE	ALLEN	H. W.	715249	... KIRBY	A. J.
736569		ATTWOOD	L. M.	47014	L. CPL KENNEDY	J. C.
625286		ARNITAGE	J. A.	426344	CPL LATIMER	A.
700419		BALL	S. V.	766923	L. CPL LAYCOCK	W. W.
736746		BETTS	C. E.	736051	PTE LENTON	S.
739103	L. CPL	BLAIR	C. E.	713830	... MANNING	F. J.
160741	PTE	BROWN	J. M.	427180	... MILNE V.C.	W. J.
713192	...	BAGULEY	F.	713347	... MCMARTIN	W.
371594	...	BONIVER	L.	713207	... MCNICHOLL	W. S.
713661	...	BROWN	J.	713526	... MCWILLIAMS	H.
736263	...	BAXTER	J. O.	736171	... MCCANDLESS	T.
43948	...	BRADSHAW	R. E.	420765	... MCCOWAN	D.
721584	...	CLEMONS	W. E.	425130	... MCGRAY	H. J.
259469	...	CURLEY	G. P.	466310	... MCENROE	D. A.
23323	L. CPL	CHANDLER	R.	353624	... OWEN	F.
372090	PTE	COOM	J. E.	713269	... PATTISON	R.
371443	...	COOPER	J.	736267	... PETER	G. E.





And here is a textual representation for those names, for clarity...

### The Names of the Fatal Casualties Listed on the Plaque on the Cross Who Died at Vimy are Listed Below

420049 CSM Eyden F.S.  
29257 CSM Middlemass T.  
420819 Pte Allen H.W.  
736569 Pte Attwood I M.

736206 Pte Harvie J.  
832135 Pte Kilcup H.L.  
718249 Pte Kirby A.J.  
47014 LCpl Kennedy



625286	Pte	Armitage J.A.	426334	Pte	Latimer A
700410	Pte	Ball E.V.	700022	LCpl	Laycock V
736746	Pte	Betts E.E.	736651	Pte	Leitch S.
736108	LCpl	Blaik T.	718699	Pte	Manning F
160741	Pte	Brown J.	427586	Pte	Milne VC
718192	Pte	Baguley F.	718847	Pte	McMartin
871504	Pte	Boniver L.	718887	Pte	McNicholl
718661	Pte	Brown J.	718526	Pte	McWilliam
736263	Pte	Baxter J.	736171	Pte	McCandle
43945	Pte	Bradshaw	420765	Pte	McGowan
721564	Pte	Clemons W.	625136	Pte	McGray H
258460	Pte	Curley H.W.	466910	Pte	McInroy D
28823	Cpl	Chandler R.	856984	Pte	Owen R.
872090	Pte	Cook J.R.	718269	Pte	Pattison R
871443	Pte	Cooper J.	736967	Pte	Piper G.B.
427642	LCpl	Cockett H.	105741	Pte	Phillips F.
718675	Pte	Duncan F.	624593	Pte	Parsons A
160168	Pte	Dickson W.M.	700967	Pte	Purnell W.
736317	Pte	Gooding C.A.	737084	Pte	Powell L.C
718755	Pte	Gorrie J.	417984	Pte	Rud A.
722078	Pte	Glassford R.A.	129200	Pte	Ruddock A
624801	Pte	Gibbons J.H.P.	77309	Sgt	Simmons
A20408	Sgt	Hamilton W.	624447	Pte	Snelgrove
736103	Pte	Hawkins A.J.	874370	Pte	Spalding J
105644	Pte	Henderson W.A.	625303	Pte	Strickler J.
628188	LCpl	Howie J.	736486	Pte	Searle C.E
736880	Pte	Hooper W.H.	719161	Pte	Willerton J
624957	Pte	Halliday F.J.	129336	Pte	Tarleton R

I stole (part of it) from here...

<http://thepipesofwar.com/production-blog/?p=1991>

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 9:39 pm**

We should not toss aside anything until it is investigated. We have always said that everyone must keep an open mind. I thought we had seen all the documents but I do not recall these??

What caught my eye is the reference to GRU2 HOUDAIN, under Captain Granger. If I recall correctly,

many of the COG-BR documents refer to GRU2. I am not sure what the link is, it needs to be checked.

It may be nothing but remember also that most of the burial records were wrong because they referred to Map 36c instead of Map 51b. What if they were also wrong on the **A.10** and it was really one sector further south in **A.16**? Just asking!

I am sure we have covered this before but there is a light rail line that is 300 yards west of the Main Road in Sector 51b.A.16, more or less at **51b.A.16.b.4.3**. Nine Elms Military Cemetery is not too far away (400 metres) at **51b.A.17.a.10.75**.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jun 27, 2017 9:45 pm**

I believe I have been recommending catholic reading for some time.

Unfortunately, this entails time and frustration but can yield a more satisfactory result.

Sometimes we are forced to realize that we may never know the whole truth of things, despite our striving.

I feel it may be better to be let down by a thoroughness rather than avoidance.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jun 28, 2017 6:45 am**

In this post from Tim:

*Burial of the dead - both our own and enemy*

I had not thought of this before, but do we know where they buried the Germans? They must have been exhumed after the war and taken to German cemeteries, so perhaps they have a record of where the battlefield graves were located as well. If the 13th Battalion was burying the dead, it would seem logical that, even if buried in separate battlefield cemeteries, they would be in the same vicinity.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jun 28, 2017 7:30 am**

Of course I got all over everywhere, what with my "catholic" reading and all...

This, for April 1917 has a lot of good stuff, positions, time sensitive...

[http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/netac ... l&r=21&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/netac...l&r=21&f=G)

Like this...

WAR DIARY OF INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.			Army Form C. 211
Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Part II and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.			A.D.M.S. 1st CANADIAN DIVISION.
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
ECOIVRES MONDAY 9-4-17			went to a hill on the CHAUSSEE BRUNEHAUT, East of MONT ST. ELOY, and saw the opening of the battle for VIMY RIDGE, a spectacle never to be forgotten. Returned to the Office at 7 a.m. and remained there till 1 p.m. Lieut.-Colonel C.P. Templeton, C.A.M.C., goes to the Advanced Dressing Station at 9 a.m. Ambulance car hit by shell, East of BRUNEHAUT FARM. Driver killed, orderly wounded. At 2 p.m. made a round of all Posts, at AMBULANCE CORNER, AUX RIETZ, LA MAISON BLANCHE, ARIANE and BRUNEHAUT FARM, and found everything going well.
ECOIVRES TUESDAY 10-4-17			Snow fell all night and there were sharp flurries all day. At 8 a.m. with Captain L.M. Rice, C.A.M.C., proceeded to AMBULANCE CORNER, which was clear, thence to AUX RIETZ where three trucks were secured and seventy five stretchers for the Advanced Dressing Station at ARIANE. Both Advanced Dressing Stations at LA MAISON BLANCHE and ARIANE were clear. Returned via MADAGASCAR CORNER and ANZIN, to MARATHON CORNER, which was clear. Captain Campbell, C.A.M.C., in charge here. Visited BRUNEHAUT FARM Post. This also was clear. In the afternoon Lieut.-Colonel C.P. Templeton, C.A.M.C., and Lieut.-Colonel R.M. Simpson, C.A.M.C., went to the Front line and reported everything clear. 1st Canadian Division have advanced 5,000 yards on a front of 1,800 yards. This necessitates extremely long carry for the Stretcher Bearers. It is reported that over 10,000 prisoners have been taken so far in the battle of ARRAS by the Canadian Corps and the Third Army. Issued O.C. 106, copy of which is attached. Headquarters, 1st Canadian Division, move to dugouts just East of ARIANE DUMP.
ECOIVRES & ARIANE WEDNESDAY 11-4-17			Cold day with snow and rain. Hosted Major C. Woollard, C.A.M.C. to the 1st Canadian Divisional Ammunition Column. A good many Officers called on various errands. At 4 p.m. opened an advanced A.D.M.S. Headquarters in the dugout formerly used as Brigade Headquarters at A.20.d.2.5. Lieut.-Colonel C.P. Templeton, C.A.M.C. and Lieut.-Colonel R.M. Simpson, C.A.M.C., with one clerk and one orderly went forward to open the office. In the afternoon the enemy showed considerable activity. The clearing of the Front has been reorganised. Opened up an Advanced Dressing Station on the LENS-ARRAS Road at A.17.a.2.7. Captain R.M. Matthews, C.A.M.C. and Captain W.T. Ewing, C.A.M.C. in charge. Regimental Aid Posts in THELUS - A.12.b.1.3. (1st Canadian Battalion) and for the 2nd and 4th Canadian Battalions in trenches a little further South.

T.1234. Wt. W705-776. 500000. 4/15. Ctr. J. C. & E.

The appendices are good, too...

FIRST CANADIAN DIVISION		LOCATION OF MEDICAL UNITS.	
REGIMENTAL AID POSTS.		Reference Maps	36b. S.E. 51b. N.W. 51c. N.E. WILLERVAL.
1. RAILWAY POST	B.2.b.2.3		
2. TART TRENCH	B.7.b.4.6		
3. FARBUS WOOD	B.8.c.6.3		
4. WILLERVAL	B.3.d.7.3		



**ADVANCED  
DRESSING  
STATION.****BOIS CARRE****B.7.c.4½.6****RELAY POSTS.**

1. MCGILL MANSIONS
2. LEONARD LOUNGE
3. CULVERT

A.18.a.1.7½  
A.17.a.3.8  
A.17.a.1.5

**MAIN DRESSING  
STATIONS.**

- No. 1 ARIANE  
No. 2 LES 4 VENTS

A.20.d.2.3  
W.9.central

**COLLECTING  
STATION for  
INFECTIOUS  
DISEASES and  
SELF-INFLICTED  
WOUNDS.**

ESTRE CAUCHIE (in charge -  
No. 1 Field Ambulance) W.2.a.7.5

**HEADQUARTERS.**

A.D.M.S. (ARIANE) A.20.d.2.3  
No. 1 Field Ambulance (LES 4 VENTS) W.9.central  
No. 2 Field Ambulance (ARIANE) A.20.d.2.3  
No. 3 Field Ambulance (ARIANE) A.20.d.2.3  
Sanitary Section (ARIANE) A.20.d.2.3

1st Cdn.Divn.H.Q., 2nd  
April 17th, 1917.  
6.30 p.m.

*C. J. L. Lupton* Lieut.-Colonel,  
D.A.D.M.S.,  
for Colonel, A.D.M.S.

**Distribution :-**

- D.M.S., First Army.
- D.D.M.S., Canadian Corps.
- "Q" 1st Canadian Division.
- "G" 1st Canadian Division.
- A.D.P.S., Canadian Corps.
- O.C. No. 1 Cdn. Field Ambulance.
- O.C. No. 2 Field Ambulance.
- O.C. No. 3 Field Ambulance.
- O.C. 1st Cdn.Divl. Sanitary Section.
- O.C. No. 8 M.A.C.
- O.C. No. 13 M.A.C.
- O.C. No. 14 M.A.C.
- O.C. No. 24 M.A.C.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**Posted: **Wed Jun 28, 2017 7:37 am**

Tram railways are mentioned, too...

**WAR DIARY**  
OF  
**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

Army Form C. 211

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

A.D.M.S.,  
1st CANADIAN DIVISION.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks refer to Appendix
ARIANE	SATURDAY 14-4-17		with the German guns still in them which had been captured. A magnificent view of the country to the East of VIMY RIDGE was afforded. There was no enemy artillery in action, with the exception of a few guns trained on top of the Ridge a little North of where we were. A fire in the dugout destroyed our kitchen and mess-room together with some food. D.M.S., First Army, and D.D.M.S., Canadian Corps, called. Six cars of No. 13 Motor Ambulance Convoy stationed at No. 3 Canadian Field Ambulance Main Dressing Station at ARIANE. No. 2 Canadian Field Ambulance moved up to ARIANE to-day. Clearing of the Front difficult on account of roads, there being a long carry.	
ARIANE	SUNDAY 15-4-17		Dull day. Cold drizzle. In the morning proceeded via ST. NICOLAS, LENS-ARRAS Road. This route is good up to where it crosses the German trenches. Here it is impossible to proceed with vehicles of any kind. Proceeded on foot to the Post at the CULVERT and walked down the Plank Road to ARIANE. In the afternoon visited the Main Dressing Station at ARIANE. The carry from the Front line to the tram railhead is now over 3,000 yards. No. 1 Canadian Sanitary Section moved to ARIANE to-day.	
ARIANE	MONDAY 16-4-17		A cold north wind. Sunshine and showers. In the afternoon with Lieut.-Colonels J.J. Fraser, C.A.M.C., A.S. Donaldson, C.A.M.C., and Captain A.V. Leonard, C.A.M.C., went over the battlefield at VIMY RIDGE and inspected the Relay Post at the CULVERT, LEONARD'S LOUNGE, MCGILL MANSIONS and BOIS CARRE, which are all in deep German dugouts. Thence to PARBUS WOOD to the Regimental Aid Post 15th Canadian Battalion where I found Captain R.D. McKenzie, C.A.M.C., in a German shelter, solid concrete. Lieut.-Colonels J.J. Fraser, C.A.M.C. and A.S. Donaldson, C.A.M.C. went on to WILHELM, the Relay Regimental Aid Post. I returned to MCGILL MANSIONS and lunched with Lieut.-Colonel R.F. Wright, D.S.O., C.A.M.C. Walking is very tiresome, much mud and paths slippery. Battlefield has been well cleared. I noticed only two dead Canadians in the whole of our Area. Progress on tram, Plank Road and Standard Gauge Railway is good. Issued O.C. 109 copy of which is attached.	

T2134. Wt. W708-776. 500000. 4/15. Sir J. C. & E.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**Posted: **Wed Jun 28, 2017 1:46 pm***rlaughton wrote:*

In this post from Tim:

*Burial of the dead - both our own and enemy*

I had not thought of this before, but do we know where they buried the Germans? They must have been exhumed after the war and taken to German cemeteries, so perhaps they have a record of where the battlefield graves were located as well. If the 13th Battalion was burying the dead, it would seem logical that, even if buried in separate battlefield cemeteries, they would be in the same vicinity.

Quite. And who exhumed them? Or by "they" did you mean the Germans Richard?

I would think that German prisoners were probably used to gather in and bury the German dead in

what by then was a Canadian rear area. Who better after all? Whether such burials were recorded or how, that must have been in the German records, of some kind.

---

## Hold the phone

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jun 28, 2017 4:53 pm**

Our search utility comes up blank for the following query: "44 soldiers from Canada and ten from the United Kingdom"

Reason I tried the query relates to the well known CWGC information we have about the description of GRAVE CA 40:

**CWGC wrote:**

GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.

Second to last paragraph of the Historical Information:

**CWGC wrote:**

There are now nearly 700, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, almost 150 are unidentified and a special memorial is erected to one Canadian soldier, believed to be buried among them. **Other special memorials record the names of 44 soldiers from Canada and ten from the United Kingdom, buried in other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.** Four graves in Plot IV, identified as a whole but not individually, are marked by headstones bearing the additional words: "Buried near this spot". The great majority of the British graves are of April 1917; the French are of 1914 and 1915. 177 French graves have been removed to other cemeteries.

Correct me please if I am wrong, but did we not decide that the Duhallow Block for 44 British troops, was indeed for British troops?

**EDIT: I was distracted by the coincidence of 44 names on the block. These names are will identified in the COG file and at CWGC as Canadian soldiers, not British.**

I challenge this given the above description. I believe the Duhallow Block in Nine Elms Military Cemetery is for 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion.

And therefore I believe the "cancelled Memorial Cross" was replaced by the Duhallow Block to 44 British soldiers.

And, if their graves were destroyed by shellfire, they never were in Nine Elms, and they could not have been 6 meters down in CA40.

Of course, any grave site in the area was subject to shell fire.

So why am I now returning to think their graves were destroyed in CA39? I thought I had been convinced they were never there.

Where to look? Sometime between April 10, 1917 and the final German offensive in the spring of '18, if we are lucky, we may find a Canadian war diary from another unit describing the destruction of these graves.

If we are not lucky, a British unit was in the area at the time, and we will have no war diary entry for proof.

I have much catholic reading on my plate now. 😊

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jun 29, 2017 10:35 am**

OK...Let's construct the narrative for the men from the 60th Battalion who were killed, on November 26, 1916, by a short shot from a "friendly" trench mortar.

I think we can accept that they were killed at the eastern end of Bentata Tunnel and on this map we can see that is at A.10.c.74.04 (my own location)...A.10.c.75.05 is OK with me.

If we accept the location of the exhumation as A.10.c.9.5 we are forced to accept that the remains of these soldiers were physically moved about 260 yards for burial. The bodies were carried forward and north (toward the front lines rather than west to more rearward area where actual battle conditions would be a less likely occurrence) and one could state that they were in no need of medical attention so there was no need to get them to an aid post or field ambulance.

Was there an established cemetery already there? Would these men be the first burials at this location? Had the German's already established a cemetery here at some time in the past? Unfortunately, I have found nothing to support any of these positions but I wonder why these men weren't carried back to a quieter place for burial.

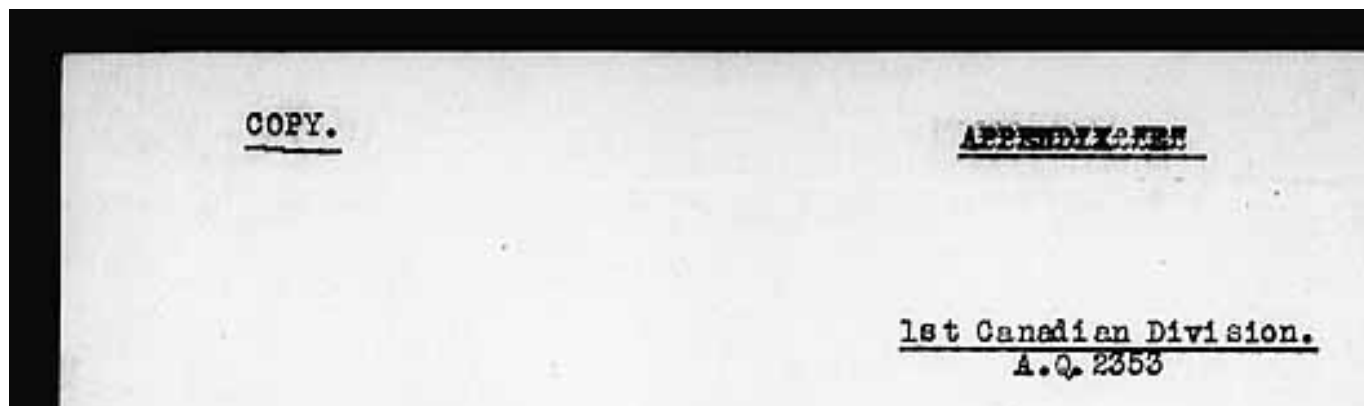
I see A.10.c.9.5 (on this map) as being just south of the northernmost crater in the Claudot Group...If one views the illustrated crater immediately east of the "T" in Claudot, I see A.10.c.9.5 by imagining the round aspect of the illustrated crater as the face of a clock and finding that locus where the numeral "6" would be on that imaginary dial. I fully realize that "pinpointing" any position from an individual's interpretation of where it is on any trench map is a bit idealistic. But I don't see the burial in between the Claudot and Vissec craters.

Obviously we know that the men of the 16th Battalion did jump off, as one of the units charged with initiating the attack for the capture of the Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917, across ground between the Vissec and Claudot craters; where they took their first enemy fire and suffered their first casualties.

If one accepts that parties of men from the 13th Battalion buried dead from the 16th on April 9th...where would they decide to begin these burials? Would those in charge of such decisions know that there would be exhumations at some future date?

I have seen reports that 669 horses needed to be buried around this battlefield, during April 1917, and they were buried in clearly specified locations...I guess, in order to avoid mixing with human remains.

Here's something from the 1st Division but for the month of May 1917...





TO ALL CONCERNED.

B URIAL OD DEAD HORSES.- In continuation of D.R.O. 2824, the following additional instructions are issued for the burial of dead horses:-

1. The Divisional Area will be divided into Sub-areas as follows :-

(i) ESTREE CAUCHIE Area, which will include those parts of squares Q.32, W.1, 2, 3, 7, and 8, which lie within the Divisional Area, TOWN MAJOR, ESTREE CAUCHIE responsible.

(ii) QUATRE VENTS, Square W.9.  
SENIOR A.N.C. OFFICER AT QUATRE VENTS, responsible.

(iii) CAMBLIGNEUL AREA Sq.W.14, W.15. and W.21, W.20.b.,  
TOWN MAJOR OF CAMBLIGNEUL responsible.

(iv) CAMBLAIN L'ABBE AREA. Sq.W.16 and W.22.  
TOWN MAJOR CAMBLAIN L'ABBE responsible.

(v) DIVISIONAL TRAIN AREA, including squares W.23, 28, 29, and 30, E.5. and E.6.a. and c.  
O.C. Divisional Train responsible.

(vi) ARTILLERY AREA. (LE PENDU and vicinity) consisting of squares E.6.b and d., E.12, F.1, 7 and 8.c.,  
The O.R.A. will hold the O.C., 1st Cdn.D.A.C. responsible.  
The O.C., D.A.C. may sub-divide his area into as many parts as he thinks fit and place each under the charge of one of the Ammunition Echelons quartered therein.

(vii) BRUNEHAUT FARM AREA, consisting of Square F.15.c. and CHAUSSÉ BRUNEHAUT as far as it lies within this Divisional area squares F.23, 24, 29 and 30; also squares A.13, 14, 19, 20, 21 and 26 up to and including the LA TARGETTE-ARRAS road.-  
A.P.M. responsible. The A.P.M. will use prisoners for this work.

(viii) ECOIVRES AREA, consisting of squares E.18, F.13 and  
TOWN MAJOR, ECOIVRES responsible.

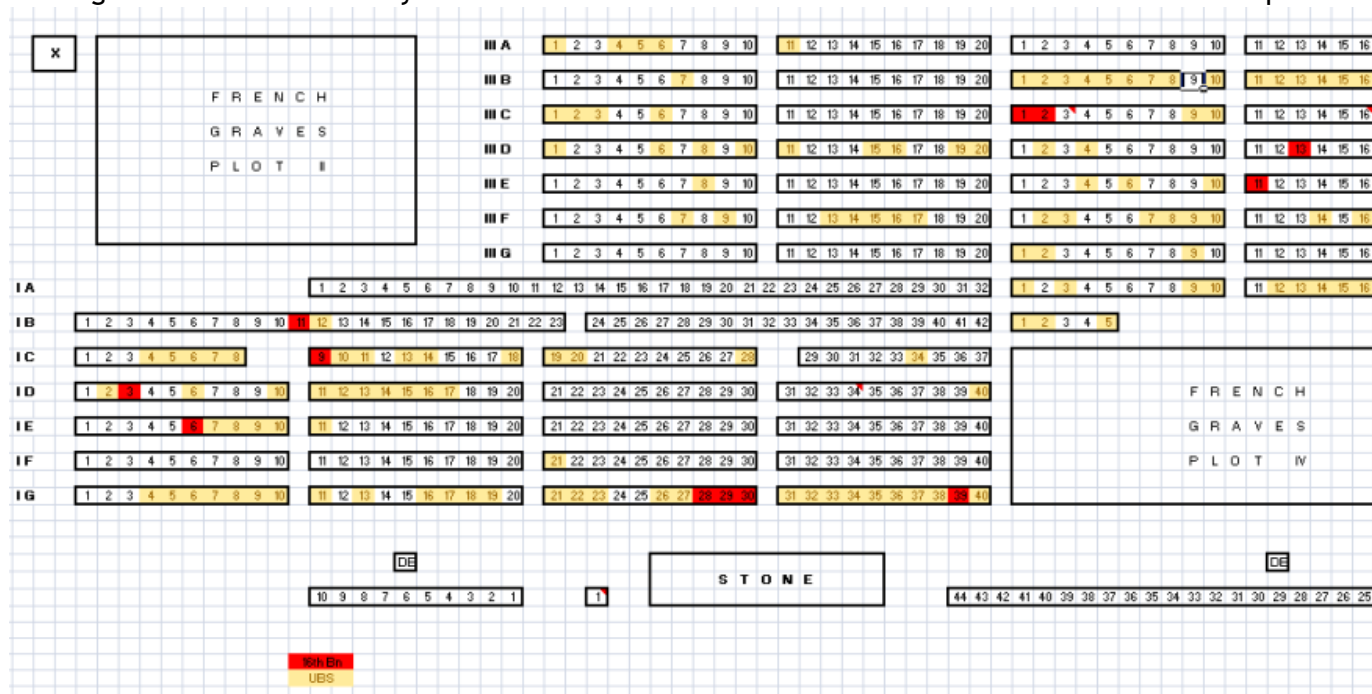
(ix) EAST OF THE LA TARGETT - ARRAS road the responsibility for burying dead horses will fall upon Infantry Brigades in the line, each being responsible for its own area.

forward



### Fourth Step

Copy sheet: ICS16thBn and identify the known 16th Bn graves. Then focus on the 15th Bn soldier in Plot IV B 9, among way too many unknowns. Realize this row is brought in shortly after Plot I G is complete and that there are three 16th Bn soldiers "Buried near this spot" in the next rows Plot IV C 1-3 and Plot IV D 16. At this point in the analysis, we are realizing this is pretty much where most of the missing men of the 16th Bn lay...there will be about 13 more left to account for in the final step.



### Fifth Step

Copy sheet: OTHERS. For a better understanding of choices to make later, identify most of the units by color in the chart.





## Seventh Step

Copy sheet: B\_WhatIf assign 16th Bn formatting to high probability graves.

Note there are 60 high probability choices below to distribute 40 graves.

Note the 37 highest-value choices are in two groups at the end of this list, leaving only 3 others to select from to complete 40(44) missing.

**Important:** *The more you think about these two groups - the more it smells and should have your spidey-sense tingling big-time!*

**Do this:** Read between the lines!

The 40 selected choices are in **bold** (two chosen at random from Plot IV.B as "15th"):

I.B.12 - Proximity of Pvt McKinnon 181108 in I.B.11

I.C.04 - Near Claudot Crater, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.05 - On the unnamed road, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.06 - Excellent location on edge of 16th Bn's battlefield, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.07 - 100 meters south of Claudot Group, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.10 - Excellent location on edge of 16th Bn's battlefield, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.11 - Excellent location on edge of 16th Bn's battlefield, 16th Bn's Aleksei Rud Plot I Row C Grave 8, brought in late

I.C.19 - Proximity of 14th Bn unidentified casualty in I.C.18, red patch of 1st Division

I.C.20 - Proximity of 14th Bn unidentified casualty in I.C.18, red patch of 1st Division

I.C.34 - Proximity of Pvt Smithson 15th Bn in I.C.35

I.D.11 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.D.12 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.D.13 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.D.14 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.D.15 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.D.16 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely

I.D.17 - Unidentified group of 8 soldiers, 7 of which are likely; laterally transported by light rail?

I.E.07 - Pvt Paulson 736620 in same row Plot I.E.7 and exhumed location in proximity

I.E.08 - Pvt Paulson 736620 in same row Plot I.E.7 and exhumed location in proximity

I.E.09 - Pvt Paulson 736620 in same row Plot I.E.7 and exhumed location in proximity

I.E.10 - Pvt Paulson 736620 in same row Plot I.E.7 and exhumed location in proximity

I.E.11 - Pvt Paulson 736620 in same row Plot I.E.7 and exhumed location in proximity

I.F.21 - 16th Bn anomaly in predominantly 10th/7th Bn CA1?

I.G.06 - COG of I.G.05 "Private 15th Bn", just south of 16th battlefield

I.G.07 - COG of I.G.05 "Private 15th Bn", just south of 16th battlefield

I.G.08 - COG of I.G.05 "Private 15th Bn", just south of 16th battlefield

I.G.17 - Good location by jumping off point

I.G.18 - Good location by jumping off point

I.G.19 - A little too far south, perhaps should be Neutral

I.G.21 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.22 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.23 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.31 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.32 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

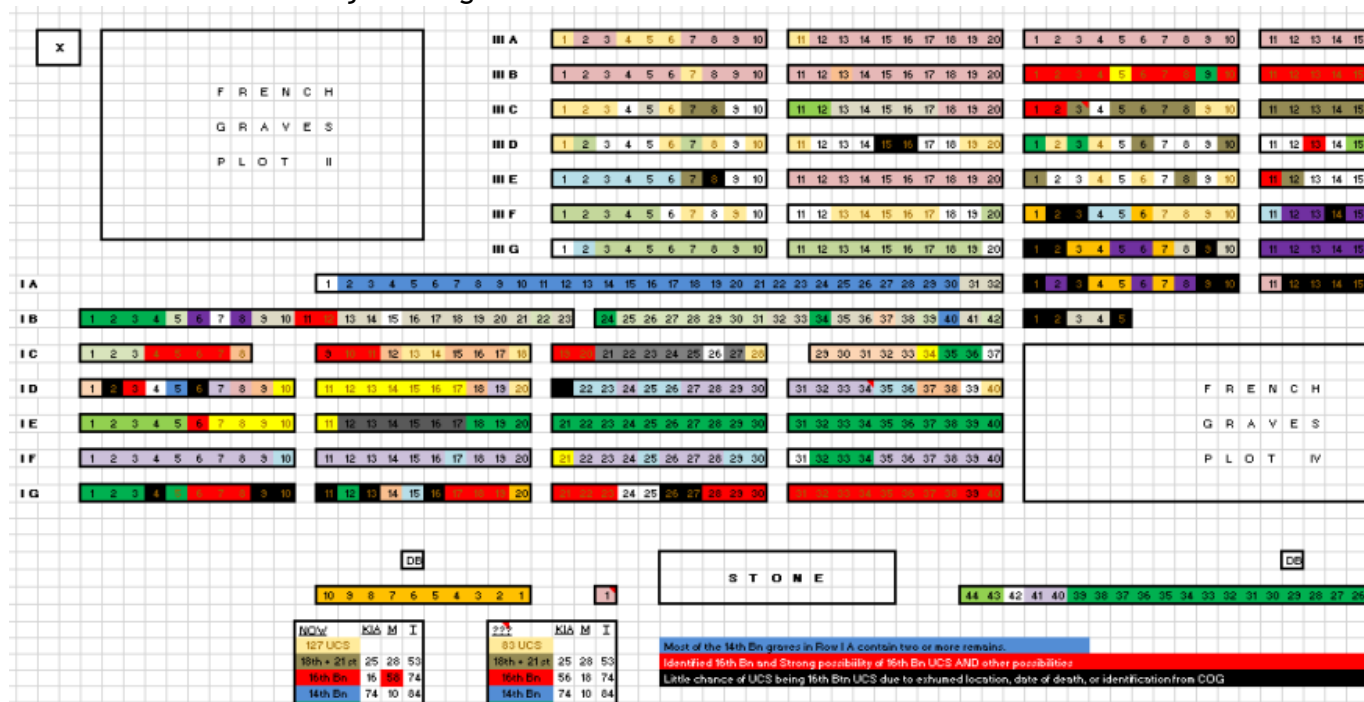
I.G.33 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.34 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is Pvt Duncan 718675 16th Bn

I.G.35 - Highest value, I.G.37 "Canadian Scottish Numeral", all from same exhumed area at jump-off point, I.G.39 is



40 count as choices were just too good!



Where are the missing men of the 16th Bn? Most likely in the locations identified above in Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

The excel file can be downloaded [here](#). And COG file.

My math provides the following overall certainty in regards to the accuracy of these predictions (73 viable locations for 56 graves):

77%

Case closed?

*rlaughton on Jul 4, 2017 wrote:*

I would say this case is CLOSED unless someone has proof that the CWGC was wrong and the men were not concentrated into Nine Elms Military Cemetery. To the best of my knowledge, no such proof exists to date.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sun Jul 02, 2017 12:05 pm**

Great work Ted. I have downloaded and will have a look over the next couple of days.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Mon Jul 03, 2017 12:54 pm**

MOST impressive Ted!

And if the grave markers on their previous graves were blown off or destroyed by shellfire, that would explain the large number of intact bodies, but their becoming "unknowns."

The fact that there are so many unknowns must presumably indicate that either they were first buried without proper identification or that their markers were somehow removed or destroyed before the

exhumations and consolidations began.

I cannot believe they were not recorded properly at first; it flies in the face of what we see elsewhere.

So we are left with grave markers destroyed or scattered by shellfire, or removed by a French farmer, the latter being very unlikely in this case I assume.

And so we come back to the question of the initial Canadian burial records: what they contained and whether they still exist?

Or whether any references exist in private records that might shed light on all this?

The families of these men, or many of those families, naturally would have inquired of the authorities about the fate of their relations and their places of burial. Such inquiries would often go to the battalion, to the OC or even to the subordinate officers who commanded the companies and platoons.

Somewhere out there in some family's trunk is the confirmation of where these men were first buried and who knows what else about that process.

Next stop Ancestry?



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 22 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jul 03, 2017 3:27 pm**

I had sent my ERROR report to part of the group, but now I see that there are others in the gang of reviewers that are not seeing all the details. My mistake, I should have kept to posting. I had questioned Ted's earlier suggestion about the graves at CA39 (51b.A.11.c.3.0), as I had always taken them as 15th Battalion men. Ted may be correct that those graves could be freed to take the names of 16th Battalion men. I won't know more until I hear back from Greg as to what he knows about the 15th Battalion men in the list. Either way, Ted has tipped the iceberg on something very significant - what is it?

Ted:

You are onto something here that may be VERY SIGNIFICANT. The problem is now, I don't know what it is!! It either alters CA39 or CA40 tremendously. I had always made the assumption that all the men on this particular COG-BR (2618051) were men of the 15th Battalion.

Greg may have additional details on Pte. J. Weaver #800117 in Nine Elms 4.B.9. His E-13 says he was killed on the 17th of April but it does not state his initial place of burial. Further down the list we find Private Bradley #77632, also 15th Battalion and his E-13 confirms he was exhumed from 51b.A.11.c.3.0. We know from the E-13 for Private Mosley #447705 that those trench coordinates are CA39.

What I see now is that the GRRF for Memorial Cross 13 (the 44 Canadians lost at CA39 - see GRRF 2617976, 2617977, 2617978) does not include the names of Weaver, Park or Bradley. We do not know if Weaver or Park came from CA39, only Bradley is confirmed. These are the men in the headstones at the front of the cemetery, which is confirmed by the E-13 for Sgt. Ward #204254.

For the COG-BR 2618051, I made a STUPID assumption that all those men were from CA39 because the first one is so marked and BRADLEY was at CA39. I have to admit now that there are no DITTO marks from 4.B.2 to 4.D.4, so there is nothing to say that everyone on that page was from CA39. If Weaver and Park were buried there, then there is strong evidence that they are all from CA39 but no proof.

For the record, the headstone schedule HS 2141368 does not refer to them as 15th Battalion, rather a "Canadian Regiment". I also checked to see if there were any other references to CA39 or 51b.A.11.c.3.0 on other COG-BR pages and there are not.

Could the CWGC be wrong? If these men are all CA39 men of the 15th Battalion, then the statement that the original CA39 Arras Road Cemetery was destroyed in a later battle is incorrect. Any of the 15th Battalion men in the Memorial Row may thus be buried in an unmarked grave in Nine Elms. We at least know some of them are, as they were exhumed from CA39. I always wondered why the CWGC referred to exhumations from CA39 if the cemetery was destroyed? At best, some graves were destroyed.

The alternative is, as you say, that those men are not CA39 men of the 15th Battalion then it opens it wide up for them to be men of the 16th Battalion that belonged to CA40. We often have wondered if CA40 could have been close to CA39, maybe even on the opposite side of the road? Could it be that CA39 was concentrated into Nine Elms and it was CA40 that was destroyed in a later battle? Were they both partially destroyed?

Here is hoping that Greg has some information on the others (Weaver & Park). Note that I include everyone on that page as of the same group as Bradley, although in Row D, is on that page and was at CA39 51b.A.11.c.3.0. On the next page, they start a new location (CB10 at 51b.A.11.a.7.6).

So these men are either:

1. CA39 men of the 15th Battalion, so not lost from Arras Road Cemetery
2. CA40 men of the 16th Battalion, so no longer missing

Either way, that is significant!

Ref, Map 51B 1/400000

## CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

### Burial Return.

Sheet 30.  
29/5/19.

"A"

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial.....NINE ELMS.....THELUS

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.	Remarks.
4	B	1	A 11 c 3.0.	NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	2		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	3		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	4		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	5		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	6		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	7		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	8		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	9		YES	Pte. J.Wearer. 800117 15th. Canadians.	NO	
4	B	10		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	11		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	12		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	13		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	14		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	15		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	16		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	17		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	18		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	19		NO	NIL	NO	
4	B	20		NO	NIL	NO	
4	D	1		XX YES	192145 L/C R.Park. 15th. Bn. Canadians.	NO	
4	D	2		NO	NIL	NO	
4	D	3		YES	77632 Pte. J.H.Bradley.	NO	
4	D	4		NO	NIL	NO	

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

First Army Press, A.P. & S.R. - 251/15-100-PPH

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by 15thBnCEF

Posted: Mon Jul 03, 2017 4:36 pm

The 15th Battalion Record of Service cards for Weaver, Park and Bradley record the following information (paraphrased) regarding their death/burials;

Weaver: KIA 17-4-1917. No location recorded for either death and/or burial.

Park: initially reported as MIA, then KIA. Seen to have fallen before reaching the German front line. Body found & identified by Pte Patterson 10-4-1917

Bradley: KIA. Buried by Lt Andrews at A.11.C.3.0

Bradley's name is the only one of three whose name appears on the 15th Battalion's Vimy cross.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 04, 2017 6:58 am**

It appears I have a memory problem, as this issue was addressed on April 3rd 2016, more than a year ago.

[viewtopic.php?p=100780#p100780](#)

I even addressed the question of the "ditto" marks and said:

Remember that in making this analysis I EXCLUDED all the men that I think might also be 15th Battalion men that are in graves in the main part of the cemetery, even if they have a second memorial stone along the wall. If those are NOT men of the 15th Battalion then that frees another large group that could be 16th Battalion men.

If I was correct that *"the second cemetery on the west side of the Lens-Arras Road in 3rd Brigade war diary is the 14th Battalion burial ground - Nine Elms Military Cemetery"*, then it would be **CA\_**, which is what I was trying to find from E-13 records of the 14th Battalion men. **Is it possible that it was CA40?**

It takes us back to the all important question: ***"Who other than Norm Christie has ever said that the 40 men of the 16th Battalion are missing?"*** From day one the CWGC has said all those men were concentrated into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. It really does not matter where **CA40** was located, if the men were recovered and concentrated into Nine Elms. We have been chasing a ghost!

I would say this case is CLOSED unless someone has proof that the CWGC was wrong and the men were not concentrated into Nine Elms Military Cemetery. To the best of my knowledge, no such proof exists to date.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

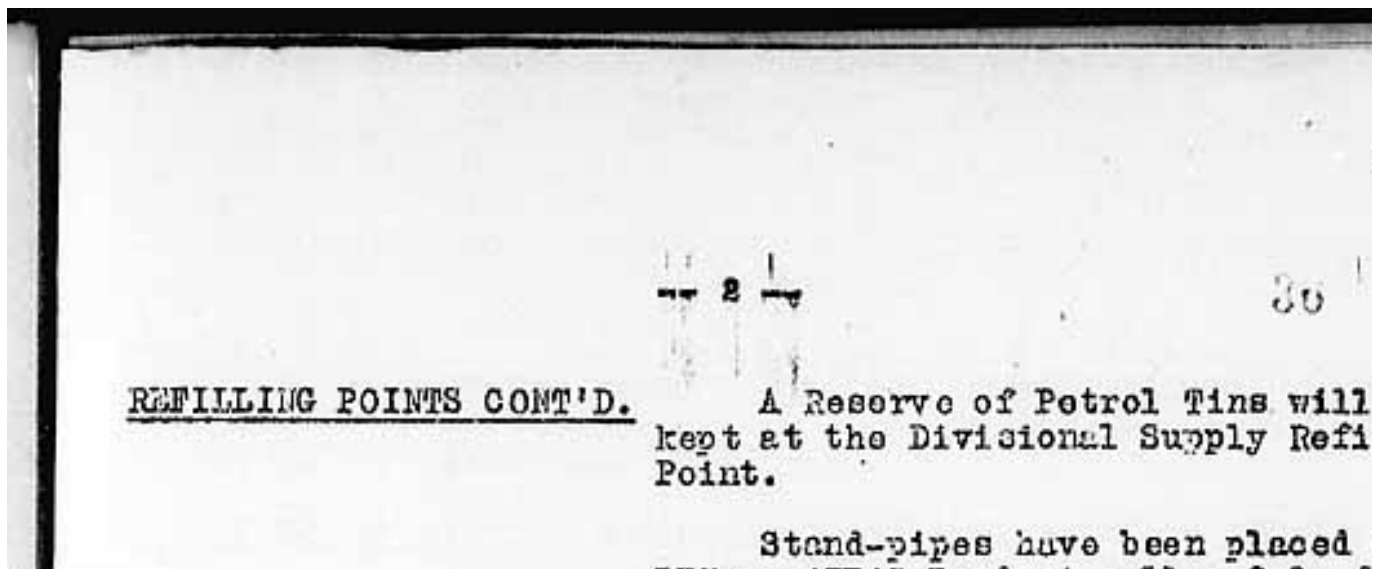
by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 06, 2017 6:32 pm**

Very good work, Ted.

I still think that crunching numbers will help determine likelihood and probability.

This is interesting but from April 19, 1917...it relates burials, at this point, are to be carried out according to a written order..."A. S.(?) 28-23...



LENS - ARRAS Road at A.11.C.8.8. 1  
filling of water carts.

#### 4. DUMPS.

R. E. Material.

The Divisional Advanced Dump Material will be established near CARRE, where the C.R.E. will place for Tools, Timber, Wire, Sandbags,

S.A.A. etc.

S.A.A., Grenades, Stokes, and works Dumps will be established at NINE ELMS, and BOIS CARRE DUMPS as down in my O/19/106 of the 17th in The establishment of these Dumps shown in Table "A".

Rations.

A Reserve of Iron Rations and cunts will be kept at BOIS CARRE D

#### 5. TRAFFIC CONTROL.

Up to and including the ARRAS BETHUNE Road, no change.

East of the ARRAS - BETHUNE Traffic will be in an Easterly direction through NEUVILLE ST. VAAST to the L TIELEUX Cross Roads.

On the LENS - ARRAS Road, both LENS TIELEUX, within the Divisional in both directions.

The Plank Road from the LENS ARRAS Road to ARIANE, will be EAST WEST only.

The traffic from LENS TIELEUX THIEUX to the COMMANDANT'S HOUSE, thence to FARBUS will be in both directions. The A.P.M. will arrange control of traffic on this road, L TIELEUX to FARBUS, in conjunction the A.P.M., 2nd Canadian Division.

#### 6. CLEARING THE BATTLEFIELD. Arrangements for the burial of dead will be carried out as directed by A.1.28-23 of the 19th inst.

Burial of the  
Dead.

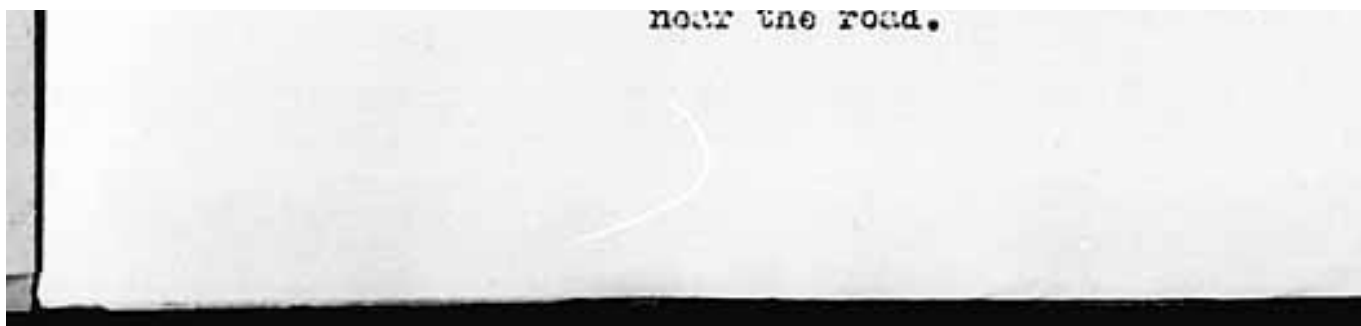
The Divisional Graves Register Officer has his Headquarters at AR DUMP.

#### 7. SALVAGE.

The O.C., Salvage Company has Headquarters at ARIANE DUMP. Brigades will arrange immediately after the action to collect all material into dumps in the forward area. Notification of these Dumps to be forwarded to 1st Canadian Division "Q" and to the Salvage Officer.

Dumps in the forward area are





This image is from this War Diary...

<http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/netac ... l&r=67&f=G>

Pages 58 onward have listed officer casualties of the 1st Division for April, 1917

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 06, 2017 10:52 pm**

Here's an interesting page...it appears to be a casualty tally of the 1st Division for April, 1917...

Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

(Erased heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information											
PLACE.	APRIL. 1917.	Hour	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		MISSING.		SICK.		EVACUATED.		REINFORCEMENTS.	
			O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.
BOOIVRES.	1st.		-	-	1	16	-	-	1	52	1	21	-	-
	2nd.		1	4	1	9	-	-	2	25	-	31	2	50
	3rd.		-	2	-	24	-	-	2	37	-	18	3	174
	4th.		-	8	1	43	1	-	1	40	-	19	-	39
	5th.		2	14	3	31	-	1	2	35	-	88	4	40
	6th.		-	14	3	30	-	3	2	45	-	69	-	67
	7th.		-	3	-	24	-	-	2	33	-	70	4	24
	8th.		2	9	1	31 <sup>1st</sup>	-	-	1	35	-	33	8	6
	9th.		11	15	41	31	4	2	-	52	-	85	7	-
BOURIE.	10th.		17	36	25	92	1	54	-	11	-	649	2	-
	11th.		5	51	15	320	12	7	1	17	-	333	1	27
			38	156	91	652	7	67	14	382				

For Officer Casualties see Appendix "A" attached.

Those marked "2", deduct.

Those marked "s", self-inflicted.

2353 Wt. W2312/1454 700,000 5/15 D.D.&L. A.D.S.S./Forma/C. 2113.

*Richard Snow*  
Lieut. Colonel.  
A. A. & Q.M.C.  
1st Canadian Division.

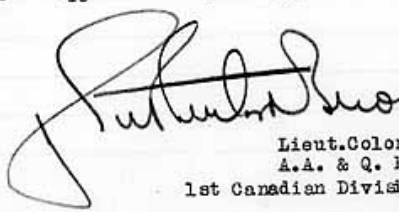
Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**  
(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information											
<b>BOURIE.</b>	<b>APRIL.</b>		<b>KILLED.</b>		<b>WOUNDED.</b>		<b>MISSING.</b>		<b>SICK.</b>		<b>EVACUATED.</b>		<b>REINFORCEMENTS.</b>	
	<b>1917.</b>		O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.
	12th.		38	156	91	652	7	67	14	382	-	146	11	161
	13th.		12	222	3	780	1	79	3	50	-	94	7	267
	14th.		-	10	7	17	-	3	2	69	-	132	1	-
	15th.		1	8	-	71	-	12	-	5	-	11	-	-
	16th.		-	29	4	101	-	12	5	92	-	80	7	7
	17th.		-	-	-	11	-	1	2	50	-	15	3	330
	18th.		-	14	-	51	-	-	2	60	-	55	4	130
	19th.		-	3	1	5	-	-	3	87	-	38	3	-
	20th.		-	4	-	15	-	1	2	39	-	23	6	378
	21st.		-	4	-	22	-	4	4	61	-	40	9	16
			45	659	111	2204	10	552	38	930				

Those marked "2" deduct.

For Officer Casualties, see Appendix "A", attached.

  
 Lieut. Col.  
 A.A. & Q. M.  
 1st Canadian Division

2353 Wt. W2346/1454 700,000 5/15 D.D.&L. A.D.S.S./Form C. 2113.

Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**  
(Erase heading not required.)

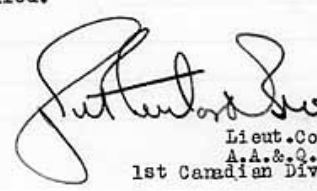
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information											
<b>BOURIE.</b>	<b>APRIL.</b>		<b>KILLED.</b>		<b>WOUNDED.</b>		<b>MISSING.</b>		<b>SICK.</b>		<b>EVACUATED.</b>		<b>REINFORCEMENTS.</b>	
	<b>1917.</b>		O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.
	22nd.		45	659	111	2204	10	552	38	930	-	19	1	60
	23rd.		-	-	-	23	-	-	1	43	-	43	3	67
	24th.		-	4	-	15	-	-	1	37	-	30	1	21
	25th.		-	8	2	30	-	3	1	39	-	33	2	4
	26th.		-	8	1	40	-	22	3	55	-	29	3	10
	27th.		-	6	1	14	-	1	1	39	-	53	2	173
	28th.		3	3	13	31	-	-	1	33	-	27	6	20
	29th.		8	12	12	49	2	-	1	66	-	511	1	15
	30th.		-	2	2	10	-	-	1	58	-	139	2	310.
			56	705	142	2441	12	560						

Those marked "2", previously reported Missing, now reported Killed.

Those marked "a", Accidentally wounded.

Those marked "2", Deduct.

For officer casualties, see Appendix "B", attached.

  
 Lieut. Col.  
 A.A. & Q. M.  
 1st Canadian Division

2353 Wt. W2346/1454 700,000 5/15 D.D.&L. A.D.S.S./Form C. 2113.

Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**Posted: **Thu Jul 06, 2017 10:59 pm**

Here are the 669 horse casualties for the 1st Division, April, 1917...

and the Staff Manual respectively. Five pages will be prepared in manuscript. (Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information			
<b>ECUIVRES and ECURIE.</b>	<b>HORSES RECEIVED, DIED AND DESTROYED DURING MONTH OF APRIL, 1917.</b>					
	<b>D I E D .</b>			<b>D E S T R O Y E D .</b>		
<b>APRIL. 1917.</b>	<b>Cause.</b>	<b>Number.</b>	<b>Cause.</b>	<b>Number.</b>		
	Debility,	270	Debility,	227.		
	Indigestion,	1	Titamus,	1.		
	Exhaustion,	45	Exhaustion,	42.		
	Pneumonia,	6	Pneumonia,	2.		
	Drowning,	1	Parapymosis,	1.		
	Gun Shot Wounds,	28	Gun Shot Wounds,	31.		
	Valvulus,	2,	Fractured Suffraginis,	1.		
	Intestinal Calculus,	1,	Lacerated Wounds,	2.		
	Mange,	1,	Fractured Tibia,	2.		
			Fractured Carpus,	1.		
			Fractured Radius,	2.		
			Arthritis,	2.		
	<b>TOTALS.</b>	<b>355.</b>		<b>314.</b>		
<p>Horses received during April,.....27.</p> <p>2553 Wt. W2516/1454 7000/000 5/15 D.D.&amp;L. A.D.S.S./P/1000/C. 2113.</p>						

Lieut. Colonel,  
1st Canadian Division.

**Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**by **McTague**Posted: **Fri Jul 07, 2017 12:14 am**

Never saw this one before...page 26 of May 1917...

- 8 -

PS (Cont'd.)

(c) **R.E. Dump.** The R.E. Dump is situated on the South side of the AU RIETZ - BRUNHAUT FARM Road, A.8.c.2.3.

**PLIES.** No's 2, 3 and 4 Companies, 1st Canadian Divl. Tra: will take over the horse lines and camps of the corresponding Companies of the 2nd Canadian Divisional Train. The Headquarters Companies of the 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions will, for the present, remain in th

present locations.

RAILHEAD. Railhead - LABYRINTH STATION.

MAIN SUPPLY REFILLING POINT. Main Supply Refilling Point at F.11.cen on the MONT ST. ELOY - LA TARGETTE Road.

The Headquarters of the 1st Canadian Division Train will refill at the old Refilling Point at ARIAN until further orders.

For the present the S.S.O. will make arrangements to hold one days rations in the Supply

FUEL DUMP The FUEL DUMP is situated immediately of the Refilling Point.

DIVL. ORDNANCE OFFICER. The Divisional Ordnance will move to MONT ST. ELOY as soon as possible as the present location the 2nd Canadian Divl. Ordnance Officer, at CHATEAU is too far away from the units.

FIELD CASHIER. The Field Cashier will have his Headquarters at CHATEAU D'ACQ.

DIVL. CLAIMS OFFICER. The Divl. Claims Officer will have his Headquarters at CHATEAU D'ACQ.

SENIOR CHAPLAIN. The Senior Chaplain will have his Headquarters at MONT ST. ELOY.

DIVL. BURIAL OFFICER. Will take over from the 2nd Canadian Burial Officer the Headquarters and mens quarters at A.10.a.8.5. Arrangements will be made to move near NEUVILLE ST. VAAST.-

#### CEMETERIES.

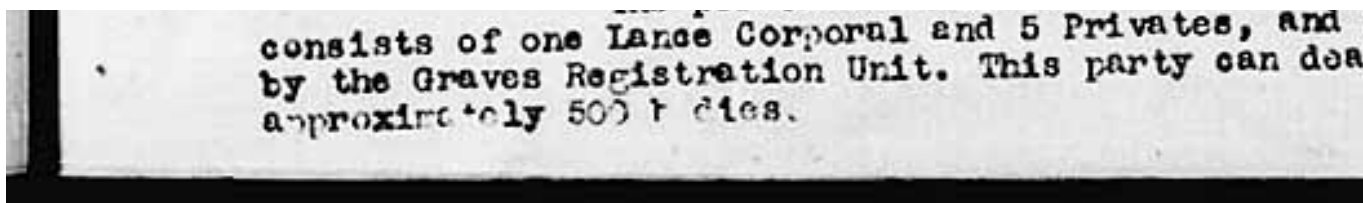
AUX RIETZ	A.8.c.6.8
THELUS	A.6.c.9.0
VIMY	T.25.c.9.0
VANCOUVER ROAD	T.28.a.7.6

VIMY and THELUS Cemeteries may be used day time.

VANCOUVER ROAD Cemetery used only by and this Cemetery has an unlimited capacity. Bodies brought from front line to T.29.central by line batt who notify the Divisional Registration Officer, and then carried by the burial party back to the Cemetery cases where it is impossible for Battalions to bring bodies, such Battalions have been supplied with star and discs, and ration bags for effects.

The personnel required at AUX RIETZ





<http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/netac ... l&r=67&f=G>

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 08, 2017 8:53 am**

### BULLETIN #1:

In the process of trying to pin down the 5th Battalion men in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery I stumbled upon an interesting situation.

Sergeant Colin Matson Wisdom #16372 is the sole member of the **16th** Infantry Battalion found in amongst the 39 men of the **15th** Infantry Battalion listed as being buried, and the graves lost, from **CA39** at 51b.A.11.c.3.0. You will recall that is the fenced and wooded area to the north of Nine Elms Military Cemetery on the opposite side of the road.

Guess where his E-13 has his battlefield burial site - if you guessed **51b.A.10.c.9.7** you are the winner!

We all know that is the TMC address for **CA40**!

Update: now applies to 2 men.

FORM 123  
9758 — 1038 — 4-6-17.

NUMBER 16372. RANK Sgt. NAME WISDOM, C.M. *M.M. Auth. F.V. 5*

UNIT 16th Batt. NEXT-OF-KIN M<sup>rs</sup> Wm Wisdom

Man. Reg. 25-W-2661 *Pendennis*  
*Everly present*  
*Spring Grove*  
*Essexworth, N*

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
9-4-17.	Previously reported Wounded, now Killed in Action.	A.

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
	<i>36c.A.10.c.9.7. BR/2249/DGR</i> Burial Report by G.R.C. <i>1/4 mile A.E. of Heundle St</i> <i>East 3 1/2 miles N of Camas BR/2500/DGR</i>	Report By I W ALL TRACE OF GR MEM X ERECTED Mil. Cem, Auth, Br2 <i>BR/</i>

BURIAL REPORT BY D. G. P. and E.

Exhumed and Re-interred *12-57*  
 in *Nine Elms Cem Thelus*  
*actual Grave Unknown*

AUTHORITY ON *649.D.69.50*

This is the GRRF where he is listed as one of those buried in CA39:

3/22966

GRAVES ADDENDA COMPREHENSIVE REPORT FORM.

REPORT No. 54.

Commune : THELUS.

PLACE OF BURIAL NINE ELMS MILITARY CEMETERY.

Army Form  
SCHEDULE No. 4  
No. *AR, 8/289*  
Date *3.9.24*



THELUS

Certified correct  
and correct.

Map Reference 51b.A.17.a.10.75.

The following are buried here:—

Registration  
No. 4

Regiment	No.	MEMORIAL ROW. Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G.R. U'd
<b>SPECIAL MEMORIAL CROSS No. 13.</b>					
<i>For consolidated inscription see Sched 75c.</i> <p>"To the memory of these 44 Canadian Soldiers, killed in Action in 1917, and buried at the time in ARR ROAD CEMETERY which was destroyed in later battle. Their Glory shall not be blotted out".</p>					
15th.Bn.Canadians		WALLACE ✓	Maj. R.E.	9/4/17	✓
do.		CAMERON ✓	Lt. I.M.	do.	✓
do.		MUNRO ✓	Lt.W.McC.	1/5/17	✓
13th.Bn.Canadians	46456	BELLAMY ✓	Sgt.W.C.	9/4/17	✓
16th.Bn.Canadians	16372	WISDOM M.M. ✓	Sgt. C.M.	do.	✓
15th.Bn.Canadians	77478	BERNE ✓	Sgt. P.W.	do.	✓
do.	447705	MOSLEY M.M. ✓	Cpl. T.	do.	✓ E
do.	47327	BARNARD ✓	A/Cpl. A.	do.	✓
do.	446433	POTTER ✓	Cpl. G.N.	do.	✓
do.	28071	ODD M.M. ✓	Cpl. F.	18/4/17	✓
do.	195070	EGOBICHON ✓	Pte. S.J.	do.	✓
do.	192334	SHORT ✓	Pte. A.	25/4/17	✓
do.	799594	McDONALD ✓	Pte. W.	9/4/17	✓
do.	204699	BROWN ✓	Pte. R.	do.	✓
do.	803147	ANDERSON ✓	Pte. J.A.	do.	✓

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 100,000 3/13 11WV(11021) Forms/W3372/5

Add Private Dingwall as well - the only other CA39 not of 15th Battalion with that address.

12332  
12-29

NUMBER 730549 RANK Pte. NAME DINGWALL, H. A.  
(13th.)  
UNIT 1st Can. Div. P.C. Gun Coy. NEXT-OF-KIN -  
FILE NO. R.I. 25 D. 1762

Mrs A Dingwall  
53 shade st  
Yall-  
Ontario  
Canada

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	CAS. SHEET NO
9-4-17.	KILLED in ACTION;	A. 241.

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
X	36c. A.10.c.9.7.	BR/2249/8922

Burial report by G.R.G.:-  
In the commune  
of Thelus-Grave C.A.39 Auth on 25-0-1762.  
Dist 51.6. A. C.30

BURIAL REPORT BY D. C. R. E.  
Exhumed and Re-interred  
in Nine Elms Comm Thelus  
AUTHORITY ON 649. D. 69.50.

Report By I W G O  
ALL TRACE OF GRAVELOST  
MEM X ERECTED IN 9 Elms  
MH. Cam. Auth. Br22597  
BR/22767/

Here they are in the Nine Elms Memorial Row:







## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by rlaughton

Posted: Sun Jul 09, 2017 7:24 am

### BULLETIN #2:

To add to the 16th Battalion soldier of **CA40** found buried in **CA39** (see Bulletin #1 above), we now have another and this time the **CA40** man is buried in **CA6**, the location about 1/2 mile south of Thelus at **51b.A.11.d.2.3**.

You've got it, he was exhumed from there and buried in Plot 1 Row D Grave 3 of the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. **CA6** is not one of the listed concentrated cemeteries on the web site, it is named by way of the COG-BR document. It held 6 men of the 1st and 2nd Divisions.

I introduce to you Private Walter McNicol #718887. His E-13 says he was buried in **CA40** at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** and then it says **51b.A.11.d.2.3** (which is where he was exhumed). I came across this while trying to identify the 5th Battalion man next to him (now believed to be L/Cpl. Frank King #147392 - topic 14869).

Pte. McNicol was killed by a sniper before the objective was reached - probably in reference to the Red Line or Swischen Stellung - exactly where he was found. They never took his body back to **CA40**, regardless of where that was located, they buried him in **CA6**. Here is the paperwork:



REF MAP. 51b. 1/40.0000

## CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

## Burial Return.

C.E.F. & E.  
RECEIVED  
MAY 1919  
Thebes 25  
54/6E

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial.....

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
1	D	2			G.R.U.2. Canadian Corps. In memory of the undermentioned soldiers who fell in Action Apr. 1917 and are buried at this spot. CA 6 Roelinecourt 51 NW1 A.11 d.2.3. An unknown soldier. 5th. Can. Bn. 18th. AP. '17	NO
1	D	3	A 11 d. 2.3.	YES	718887 Pte. W.S. McNICOL.	NO
1	D	4	-do-	YES	806420 Pte. J. LACROIX. 2nd, Canadian Bn 18/4/17	NO
1	D	5	-do-	YES	713112 Pte. M. DONOETTE. 14th, Canadian Bn.	NO
1	D	6	-do-	YES	An unknown Soldier. 2nd. Canadian Bn. 79104 Pte. W. T. HOWELLS. (See Grave I. D. 1.)	NO
1	D	7	A 16 c. 4. 4. 5.	XXX NO	NIL 541876 Pte H. WILSON 10/ Canadian K/A. 9.4.17 70/55378	NO
1	D	8	A. 16. d. 2. 1.	YES	G.R.U. 2. 19340 Pte. D. A. McDonald. M.C. 5th, Canadian Bn. Killed in Action 14/4/17.	NO

First Army Press, A.P. &amp; S.S.

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

FORM E11  
1054-10M-16-11-10.

NUMBER 718887 RANK Pte. NAME Mc NICOL W. S. 649 M

UNIT 16th. Battalion. NEXT-OF-KIN Mrs C. Mc Nicol

FILE NO. R.L. 25-DM-4861 Rollin  
Maw.

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	C.
9-4-17.	KILLED in ACTION.	

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
<i>Exhumation</i>	Grave No C.A. 40.	
<i>Burial Rpt by G.R.C.</i>	Loc. A. 10. C. 9. 7.	Authority on R.L. 26. 7a.
<i>Nine Elms Military</i>	36 C. A. 10. C. 9. 7.	PR/2248/DGR
<i>Cemetery Thelus</i>	Reconcourse - 51 B.	
<i>3 miles N of Arras</i>	A. 11. d. 23.	PR 1976/DGR 2
<i>Plot 1. Row L. Gr 3</i>	<i>Burial Report by G.R.C.:</i>	
<i>BR/21176.</i>	<i>1/2 mile S.E. of Newville</i>	
	<i>St. Vaast. 3 1/2 miles</i>	
	<i>N. of Arras.</i>	<i>PR/2284/DGR.</i>



1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAME
718887	Private	McNICOL	Walter Ste
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. PRESENT ADDRESS
16th Battalion	9-4-17	649-M-17271	Presb
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
<p>"Killed in Action"</p> <p>He was struck in the head and instantly killed by a bullet fired by an enemy sniper shortly before the objective was reached in the attack on Vimy Ridge.</p>			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. GRAVE LOCATION
Nine Elms Military Cemetery,	Thelus, 3 miles North of Arras, France.	Grave	
		Plot	
		Row	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLEMENT	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

## 16. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Plot 1. Row D, Grave 8.

## 21. REMARKS.

Exhumed from:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles North of Arras.



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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sun Jul 09, 2017 3:24 pm**

So...what? It's beginning to sound as though CA.40 was a "state of mind" for the clerks of the GRU...

"Oh, 16th Battalion?...file it as CA.40 at...let me think...Oh yeah...51B A.10.c.9.7...keeps things simpler."

But I still think crunching all the numbers is a good angle of attack.

Did you see the figures from the 1st Divisional Staff on April 9, 1917...

Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs. Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

(Errors heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information										
ECOIVRES.	APRIL. 1917.	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		MISSING.		SICK.		EVACUATED.		REINFORCEMENTS.	
		O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.	O.	O.R.
	1st.	-	-	1	16	-	-	1	52	1	21	-	-
	2nd.	1	4	1	9	-	-	2	25	-	31	2	50
	3rd.	-	2	-	24	-	-	2	37	-	18	3	174
	4th.	-	8	1	43	1	-	1	40	-	19	-	39
	5th.	2	14	3	31	-	1	2	35	-	88	4	40
	6th.	-	14	3	30	-	3	2	45	-	69	-	67
	7th.	-	3	-	24	-	-	2	33	-	70	4	24
	8th.	2	9	1	31 <sup>st</sup>	-	-	1	35	-	33	8	6
	9th.	11	15	41	31	4	2	-	52	-	85	7	-
BOURIE.	10th.	17	36	25	92	1	54	-	11	-	649	2	-
	11th.	5	51	15	320	12	7	1	17	-	333	1	27
		38	151	91	652	7	67	14	382				

For Officer Casualties see Appendix "A" attached.

Those marked "2", deduct.

Those marked "s", self-inflicted.

2333 Wt. W2344/1454 700,000 5/15 D.D.&L. A.D.S.S./Form/C. 2113.

*Richard Snow*  
Lieut. Colonel.  
A. A. & Q.M.C.  
1st Canadian Division.

I think that it is a breakdown of the casualties that was written AFTER the month of April had ended.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jul 09, 2017 4:06 pm**

These 2 cases are VERY significant. First time we have proof the burial reports are incorrect.

Two CA40 men of 16th Battalion now confirmed buried in Nine Elms.

I don't know what numbers you are "crunching". What are you trying to resolve?

Patio Blackberry

## CA40: Burial Return No.s 2248, 2249, 2250, 2287, 2247

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Sun Jul 09, 2017 4:56 pm**

Guilt by association, Richard ?

Your two two cases above mention Burial Return No.s 2248, 2249, 2250, 2287.

We can associate the following 16th Bn men of the "41" missing with each BR:

**BR 2248:** Pvt Allen, Pvt Blaik, Pvt Boniver, Pvt Hooper, Pvt Kirby, Pvt Leitch, Pvt Pattison, Pvt Snelgrove, Pvt Strickler

**BR 2249:** Pvt Betts, Pvt Bradshaw, Pvt Hawkins, LCpl Laycock, Pvt McWilliams, Pvt Owen, Pvt Purnell

**BR 2250:** Pvt Armitage, Pvt Ball, Pvt Clemons, Sgt Hamilton, Pvt Howie, Pvt Manning, Pvt Piper, Pvt

Ruddock

**BR 2287:** Pvt Hawkins, Pvt Hooper, LCpl Laycock, **Pvt Milne VC**, Pvt McCowan, Pvt McWilliams

That's 28 unique members of the 16th Bn among those four Burial Returns.

I venture to say if you give me a couple more cases, we could associate all of the 41 missing men.

Please do note we have Private William Johnstone Milne among the men above!

**P.S.: Add BR 2247 and we have:**

**BR 2247:** Pvt Dickson, Pvt Gibbons, Pvt Glassford, Pvt Gooding, Pvt Howie, Pvt Kilcup, Pvt Milne, Pvt McCowan, Pvt Parsons, Pvt Powell, Pvt Simmons, Pvt Tarlton

**That's another 10 unique 16th Bn men above, making 38 of the missing 41 on these five BRs.**

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## **Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sun Jul 09, 2017 5:32 pm**

First of all, great work Richard. I did immediately sense the importance of what you had discovered.

There has been so much good work done here that my head is spinning and I have to look back almost constantly to remember what has been established so I don't backtrack or mess things up by misstatement.

As I see it, CA.40 is as much about probability and likelihood despite anyone's opinion. Numbers that can be verified reduce suppositions or speculation closer to a framework of facts.

Did the 16th Battalion sustain 44 KiA's on April 9, 1917? Has that been established as fact?

If there were less than 44 members of the 16th that were KiA on April 9...that would call into question certain opinions.

What was the soonest date where 44 KiA's could be verified for the 16th? If there were 44 KiA's, were they concentrated to a crater? Would the Salvage/Burial parties of the 13th Battalion say..."Here's a crater...let's gather them and leave them here."

I think that there is one opinion that asks others to believe that there was a pile of bodies that needed to be disposed of quickly and a crater was just "there", so was used for expediency's sake.

If I recall, correctly, the opinion holds that that crater was almost on the "jumping off" position between the Vissec (north) and Claudot (south) crater fields. Could it be reasonable to expect that carrying bodies back to this position, if the casualties happened on the eastern side of the Arras/Les Tilleuls Road, might be considered to be arduous?

The 16th Battalion was still in the consolidated positions at the "Red Line" until 21:30 hours on the 10th when the War Diary records that they pulled out for Maison Blanche.

Why, at April's end, in a report of the Quarter Master General of the 1st Division, would casualties for April 9, 1917 be recorded as reporting 11 Officers killed and 15 OR's killed for the whole 1st Division?

Could that be true? I suppose not, but those figures must be based on some information that the man who signs his name on the report thought to be reliable.



The 10th and 11th of April seem rougher for the 1st Division and the Officers are really crushed, if the figures are close to true.

I guess my point is that examining any numbers that can be verified, forward or backward, might help us get to the signal while reducing the noise.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jul 10, 2017 6:20 am**

### **FOUND ANOTHER ONE (maybe more):**

I have started going through my Nine Elms spreadsheet and I am checking the files for all the KNOWN men of the 16th Battalion. It looks like a number of them were found to the west (+/- 150 yards) of what was deemed to be the trench burial area in the 51b.A.10.d sector. In that area they tend to report the remains were found south east of Neuville-St. Vaast rather than south west of Thelus.

Pleased to introduce Private Firth Duncan #718675 who is resting in Plot 1 Row G Grave 39 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Arrived there from CA40, found at **51b.A.10.d.2.6** (GPS= 50.3503, 2.7791) - the potato field.

*(something wrong with MediaFire in first image - says Grave No, C,A,40 Location A.10.c.9.7 BR 2248 then BR 2499 Nine Elms BR 10800)*

Direct Ancestry Link to E-13

*(okay it shows now after I modified it a bit and saved another version ??)*

FORM E13  
1054-10M-10-11-10.

NUMBER 718675 RANK Pte. NAME DUNCAN, E. 649-8

UNIT 16th. Battalion. NEXT-OF-KIN Alfred Duncan & New Street with Rintore, Al Scotland.

FILE NO. R.L. 25-D-1815

n/K. Henry Duncan Esq.  
auth. 1060 Sherburn St.  
Winnipeg Man.  
649-D-7152.

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
<u>9</u> <u>N-4-17.</u>	KILLED IN ACTION:	A. A.
DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
<u>X</u>	<u>Grave No. C.A. 40</u> <u>Location. A. 10.c. 9. 7.</u> <u>36c. A. 10. c. 9-7-</u> <u>Burial Report by G.R.C.</u> <u>1/2 mile S.E. of Neuve</u> <u>St. Vaast 3 3/4 miles</u> <u>N. of Arras.</u> <u>Burial Report by G.R.C.:</u> <u>Nine Elms Cem.</u> <u>3 miles N. of Arras.</u> <u>P.R. 937</u> <u>Blumley</u>	<u>Authority on R.L. 26. 7a</u> <u>BR/2248/DEP</u> <u>BR/2499/DEP. 8</u> <u>BR. 10800.</u>

1. NO.		2. RANK OR RATING		3. SURNAME		4. CHRISTIAN NAME	
718675		Private		DUNCAN		Firth	
5. UNIT OR SHIP				6. DATE OF CASUALTY		7. H.Q. FILE NO.	
16th Battalion				9-4-17		649-D-7152	
8. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY				9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN			
"Killed in Action"							
10. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY							
ATTACK AT VIMY RIDGE							
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.							
12. CEMETERY		13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY		14. GRAVE LOCATION		15. GRAVE LOCATION	
Nine Elms Cemetery,		3 miles North of Arras, France.		Grave.....			
				Foot.....			
				Row.....			
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN		17. EXPOSURE NO.		18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SEPT			
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.							

## 20. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

Exhumed from:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile South East of Neuville St.Vaast,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles North of Arras.

## 21. REMARKS.





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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jul 10, 2017 7:17 am**

We welcome Private James Marion Brown #160741 to the team of CA40 labelled men found buried in Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Special Memorial 4.C.1 "Buried Near This Spot". He was exhumed from **CB10** at **51b.A.11.a.7.6**. He was with Pte. Herbert Joyce McGray #625136, also 16th Battalion, marked as Special Memorial 4.C.2 - although it does not say CA40 on his E-13. There is an 18th Battalion man with them in 4.C.3. Initially all three were UNKNOWN soldiers on the COG-BR 2618061. On the initial GRRF 2617967 there are 4 of them listed, then Hughes is dropped and marked as known. That is shown on GRRF 2617951.

There is another group of 16th Battalion men from CB10 in Plot 4 Rows D and E but they do not have a reference to CA40 on their cards (*Colledge, Searle, Harvie, Middlemass and Kennedy*).

**That is the end of the Nine Elms list that I can see where there is a CA40 reference.**

There is something more about these three men, maybe we already knew they were at CA40?



FORM E13  
1054-103-16-11-16

NUMBER 160741 RANK Pte NAME BROWN J.M. 649.B-1  
 UNIT 16th Bn NEXT-OF-KIN Mr R G. Brown  
 FILE NO. R.L. 25-B-3606 Canmore  
Alta

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH
9-4-17	KILLED IN ACTION.

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
X Burial kept by G.R.C. Special crosses Nine Elms British Cemetery Thelus 3 miles N. of Arras In front of Plot 4 In Centre of Row G B R/ 2116 Remains buried but actual grave -	Grave No. C.A. 40. Location A. 10. C. 9. 7. 36 C. A. 10. C. 9. 7. Thelus N. W. A. 11. A. 4. 6. Burial Report by G.R.C.: 1/2 mile E of Newville St. Vaast 1/2 miles N of Arras	Authority on 26. 7a. BR/2247/ DGR Bk/2398/ DGR BR/1996/ DGR

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAME
160741	Private	BROWN	James Marion
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H. Q. FILE NO.	8. PRESENT STATUS
16th Battalion	9-4-17	649-B-15399	Presb.
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
"Killed in Action"			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
VIMY RIDGE.			
NOTE:—Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15.
Nine Elms Military Cemetery (General & others)		Grave Plot Row	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET			

## 20. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.

1 mile East of Neuville St.Veast, 4½ miles North of Arras, France. (Grave Registered)

## 21. REMARKS.

Approx. Location, Sheet 51b.A.10.c.9.7.



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 23 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Jul 10, 2017 9:18 pm**

From our detailed analysis of all of the information, now confirmed by these recent findings, we can now state with assurance that the men that had any reference to CA40 on their burial returns are in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

Most importantly, this is in agreement with the circa 1920's information presented by the IWGC/CWGC that all of the men of CA40 were concentrated into Nine Elms Military Cemetery. The current CWGC policy is that if there is no clear and compelling evidence in the alternative, the prior decision stands. We will not be asking the CWGC to agree with our findings, we will be agreeing with theirs.

I will prepare the report to go to the CWGC in Maidenhead and Ottawa. If any member of the CEFSG disagrees, please let me know as this must be an agreeable submission to come from the group. If you prefer, I can send it from me personally.

Our last report as a group to the CWGC in March 2016 dealt with the location of CA40. I think now we can categorically state that it DOES NOT MATTER where CA40 may have been, as the records are clear that all of those men were concentrated into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

You can let me know of your decision by posting it here (the best alternative) or responding by PM or EMAIL.

Thank you all for your many months of contributions to the resolution of this case. Most importantly, thanks to Jack Bates who first brought this case to our attention in April 2015. If it had not been for that post from Jack, our Milton Group may have allocated significant funds to a project to find Fred Baguley that had no merit. It is better we spend our time than our money. Thank you Jack!

---

### Private William Johnstone Milne VC

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 10:18 am**

*rlaughton wrote:*

Thank you all for your many months of contributions to the resolution of this case.

Ummmm, well over two years, Richard 🙄

*rlaughton wrote:*

We will not be asking the CWGC to agree with our findings, we will be agreeing with theirs.

Ain't that the icing on the cake 🤔

*rlaughton wrote:*

From our detailed analysis of all of the information, now confirmed by these recent findings, we can now state with assurance that the men that had any reference to CA40 on their burial returns are in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.



Gotta love it 😊

😞 There is one sad item for me as I close this project. Private William Johnstone Milne VC will never have a Victoria Cross grave stone over his body.

Only one thing for me to do now, and that is to return to Nine Elms Military Cemetery and pay my respects one more time.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 2:35 pm**

A draft of the report has gone out to the research team members. We will post it here shortly for additional comment before it is sent to Ottawa and Maidenhead.

I am now going to look for the best means to present Ted's BR information.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 5:14 pm**

If I look at the Spreadsheet and the locations of the "suspected" 16th Battalion soldiers, I find 18 burial locations spread out over Grid 51b.A.10 and 51b.A.11. Most of the locations contain 3 or less bodies, mostly 1 body. The exceptions are CA2 (8 bodies) and CB10 (7 bodies).

Was CA40 a myth? I was always under the assumption that the bodies were located in a single location, one that was supposedly destroyed and not concentrated. This would be a departure from what the other battalions did with their soldiers.

Perhaps I am missing a simple point. Please help.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 7:26 pm**

For sure, Brad...

I have been troubled that my effort into identifying the location of CA40 is no longer tangential to our recent findings, but appears to be **entirely contrary** (mentioned this in a PM to one or more of the team last week).

I did try to associate the various Burial Returns to the same location, but the evidence shows otherwise.

While they did not collectively prove the existence of a single mass-grave "CA40", all of these exhumations, save a half dozen from near the jumping off point, are much closer to the second strong-point than NC's predicted location (much too close to the jump off point as we have discussed on several occasions).

You did not miss the point. Please help me. 😊

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 7:29 pm**

I'll take CA.40 for \$500.00 please Alex... 😊

I have to admit that I was hoping our study would last a bit longer and parallel the efforts of Mr. Christie and would, ultimately, nail down where CA.40 actually was. I suppose that could happen.

I have had a personal belief that the 16th Battalion guys had been concentrated into Nine Elms for a long time but I had no irrefutable facts to back that up and, for all the records we have reviewed there seemed to be no one single statement of where this "spot" that was known as CA.40 really was. There always seemed to be enough "noise" to confuse the "signal".

The clerks seemed a bit free with assigning this spot to various men who had been exhumed from other places and other burial spots (like CA.39). I think that confused things a bit.

51B A.10.c.9.7 is the hardest piece of information we got...and yet that seemed to be at odds with other information and we could not agree on that.

While I do agree that, if it can be determined that all the lads from CA.40 are in Nine Elms, the mystery of the men's final resting place vanishes, it still might be nice to put CA.40 in its rightful place.

My "fantasy" CA.40 location is 300 yards west (where the sun sets) of the Arras/Les Tilleuls Road where a light rail track was...I can't seem to find it...but I wish it was at A.11.a.0.0.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rLaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 8:08 pm**

I recently said to Ted:

It appears CA40 was a temporary site or just a temporary code for "in transit" or "cold storage", as if a morgue?

Possible or not?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jul 11, 2017 8:33 pm**

I'm not sure I buy that in total but I do see that there was a need for "places" on April 9th and 10th to get things cleaned up.

It seems to me that the burial parties would be free from direct observation by the enemy but there was a lot of shelling on the areas that were taken.

I imagined CA.40 as a battlefield burial site that was temporary, an expediency, and that it was the subject of shelling to the degree that positive identification of the remains, after the shelling, was not possible. That is why the men were placed in the graves that would have no name. If there had been some evidence that the men had been just lost through negligence or mistakes I think we might have some records of ire or courts martial...something.

That doesn't explain why others, who might be from CA.39 were recorded as being from CA.40 with the A.10.c.9.7 locus?

I have questions about the cross for CA.40, too.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 1:10 am**

I understand that we agree the bodies are in Nine Elms and therefore in agreement with the CWGC. But the question of CA40 is still up in the air. The CWGC says:

"GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917."

It seems reasonable that this cemetery was identified and named CA40 after the attack. It also seems reasonable that there were more than a few bodies in this location - there were numerous single/multiple burial sites throughout the battlefield that did not get a CA/CB designation. It's hard to imagine that it did not really exist.

It seems difficult to believe that all of the "missing" soldiers identified in the spreadsheet were originally buried without a cross or some form of identification. There are 18 burial locations listed and therefore would be buried by a number of different people. Someone must have put up a cross. I can understand where a number of soldiers would not have any form of identification but it is hard to assume that only the 16th Battalion suffered such a loss of identification.

I think we need to solve the mystery of CA40, not its location but its existence, before we can conclude the case closed.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 7:10 am**

I have to believe that the existence of CA.41 is verification of CA.40's own existence.

CA41 - 51b.A15.b.3.0 (2618039) - very close to CA24? - 3 men of 3rd MGC

<http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto ... 72&t=14374>

I don't believe we will be able to separate the existence from a location. I wish we had the locus for the original, damaged cross that was erected at CA.40.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 7:54 am**

We do and it was at the site of what was called CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7. They completed and exhumation at that spot and found four (4) bodies, thus our long standing question - why did they not find 44 if they were all buried there? It certainly was not in a crater and there is nothing to say that there were 44 names on the cross, they only could read one name - Owen. The GRU refers to it as a grave of 4 soldiers.

It would be nice to know what happened to that cross, even if it was a small cross with only 4 names.

It is also believed to be the same place, or very close to the same place, where they found the men of the 60th Battalion from November 1916.

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Reburials).**

**BURIAL RETURN.**

Name of Cemetery of Reburial LIEVIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY, EXTENSION, SH. 44a.M. 54.b. 15.85.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Were
4	H	I2	5Ib. B.I8.d.8.4. ✓	NO.	UNKNOWN BRITISH OFFICER.	UNIFORM. BELT. &	
4	H	I3	44a. T.22.a.5.5. ✓	"	ROYAL FUSILIERS.	COLLAR BADGES.	
					UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER.	CAP BADGE &	
					III. TORONTO REGIMENT.	TITLES.	
6	A	I	5Ib. A.I0.c.9.7. ✓	"	UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER.	TITLES.	
6	A	2	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
6	A	3	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
6	A	4	-Do- ✓	"	Do. Do. Do. ✓	Do.	
<p>( A BROKEN G.R.U. CROSS WAS FOUND OVER THE GRAVE OF THE ABOVE FOUR SOLDIERS BEARING THE FOLLOWING INSCRIPTION: G.R.U.2. CANADIAN CORPS. IN MEMORY OF THE UNDER MENTIONED SOLDIERS WHO FELL IN ACTION 9-4-17., and BURIED AT THIS SPOT. No.859684 PTE.R. OWEN )</p>							
4	G	I6	5Ib. A.I7.c.6.9. ✓	YES. (G.R.U.)	772153 PTE. HORNBY. 1ST. CANADIAN BATTALION. K. I. A.	AS PER CROSS.	
<p><b>CANCELLED BY CERTIFIED REPORT</b></p> <p>Initialled <u>AWP. 22.5.17</u></p>				<p>..... <u>G. Bolus</u> ..... Captain.</p> <p>Cmdg. No.2.Platoon. Exhumation Company. D.G.R. &amp; E.</p>			

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

ENTERED 22.5.17

## The CWGC location description is irrefutable

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 9:38 am**

**vimyboy wrote:**

But the question of CA40 is still up in the air.

**CWGC wrote:**

...274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track...44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion...

Brad, my bizarre .pdf dreams from last night were about exactly that - CA40 still bothers me!

I need some of my least favourite word...CLOSURE.

**Theory:** The location description is irrefutable - the unit description is not.

Our recent analysis has shown the 40/44 missing men came in from various locations, therefore, 44 of the 16th Bn soldiers were never located in one place prior to interment in Nine Elms. And, there are not enough missing/dead 16th Bn soldiers to account for another group of 44 men.

We should consider that the unit description is wrong...perhaps they were 44 Canadian soldiers of another or several other battalions. 🤔 ?



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 10:00 am**

Tim - are you referring to the small cross (Owens) or the larger memorial cross? It appears that other battalions located their memorial crosses at the cemeteries where most of their soldiers were buried (ie. 15th Battalion).

Does anyone know of a researcher in England that is familiar with the IWM archives? I would be prepared to visit the IWM if there were documents relating to Nine Elms or CA40.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 10:29 am**

Brad, I was intersted in the large cross that appears to be undamaged that Rob provided the images for. And I wondered about its history. If it can be considered to be "original" I wonder when it was made...

<http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto ... 00#p107812>

"This cross was originally erected on the battlefield by the battalion"

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **15thBnCEF**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 1:01 pm**

Even the 15th Battalion's cross is more complicated than it 'appears' when you start to look carefully at the names of the men on it as well as the names of men that are not.

Most, but not all, of the names on the cross are of men who were buried at either CA35 or CA39.

However, some names on the cross belong to men whose remains were buried and later located and exhumed from locations other than where the cross was located - CA35.

Some names that are on the cross belong to men who were KIA well after 9-10 Apr Vimy - into May for example.

Quite a number of men who died at Vimy do not have their names on the cross at all.

The 15th's dead from Vimy can all be 'accounted for' but the list on the cross is not definitive. I would surmise that the cross was the battalion's best attempt with the information available at the time, to commemorate those they could confirm to be dead.

The cross was located at CA35 where twenty three 15th men were buried but a larger number of 15th men (39) were at CA39 along with seven men from other units.

Having said all that, what the cross does not establish is that all the men whose names appear on it were buried at the cross' location.

Having looked again at the image of the 16th Bn's cross in the forum post at

<http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto ... 00#p107812> - how much of that cross is original?

Clearly the plaque at the bottom was added 'after-the-fact' to explain the history of the cross.

Is the metal plaque above it with the list of names original or was it also added later? The main inscription at the top of the cross states "Officers, NCOs and Men who fell yet there are no officers names on the metal plaque? I don't see Sgt Wisdom's name there either.

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### CWGC description could have been written on the battlefield

Page **24** of **30**

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 2:23 pm**

Thanks for this, Greg.

What you have told us I find is entirely applicable to the CA40 cross as well...

...and goes a long way to explain where the idea of these 40/44 men in the same location came from. This would confirm that they were not from the same location, but coincidentally explains why they were on the same cross.

Eureka! This is entirely possible:

The CWGC description could have been written on the battlefield while looking at the cross which was situated over a subset of the missing 40/44 men.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jul 12, 2017 4:15 pm**

I just went back over Urquhart's "History of the 16th Battalion" and there is no hint that men went missing or that there might be a scandal concerning the treatment of dead soldiers after any battle. I could find no mention of CA.40.

That book was published by The Trustees, The 16th Battalion (The Canadian Scottish) Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1932.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 1:45 am**

Greg/Ted/Tim;

We have never been able to find a picture of the 16th Battalion Memorial Cross in the field. I have personally seen the cross and the name plaque looks original.

I agree that it is possible that the cross was placed as a memorial to the soldiers who died in the battle but not placed at CA40 or other large battlefield cemetery.

It is definitely possible that the dead of the 16th Battalion were placed in a number of smaller burial plots, rather than one large cemetery. The original burial locations are all within the 16th Battalions battlefield.

The only questions I have is why were so many 16th Battalion soldiers listed as unidentified? One would have to believe that all identification was removed at the time of the original burial (i.e. tags, pay books, etc) or that no effort was made to identify the soldiers or that the paperwork was lost.

Getting closer.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 5:59 am**

If I understand the process correctly, the Memorial Cross is what is referred to as Cross 9 for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, in honour of men buried in the cemetery and lost elsewhere. That was sent to Vancouver after the war. That would be similar to Greg's 15th Battalion Memorial Cross, sent to Toronto after the war, which if I recall is the basis of Cross 2 at Nine Elms. That differs from the Special Memorial Cross 13 at Nine Elms, which is for 15th Battalion men and others lost at CA39, when the cemetery was destroyed. There were a number of those for other Canadian battalions. I wonder if their museums/archives have them?

Cross 1 - 10th Battalion 2617968

Cross 2 - 15th Battalion 2617968, 2617969, 2617970

Cross 3 - 43rd Battalion 2617970

Cross 4 - 13th Battalion (these appear to be a number of CA37 lads) 2617970, 2617971

Cross 5 - 5th Battalion (no separate names) 2617971

Cross 9 - 16th Battalion 2617972, 2617973

Special Memorial Cross 13 (CA 39 men lost) - 2617976, 2617977, 2617978

You will note that there is not a Special Memorial Cross #\_\_ for the CA40 men lost, because they were not lost, they are in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. If they had been lost, there would have been a SM#. Those are what are referred to as the "Kipling Memorials".

On another note, I checked the E-13 files of the other 16th Battalion men that were not known to be named to CA40 or buried in Nine Elms. I could find no reference to CA40 for their burials in the other cemeteries. The only one I could not find was Captain Victor Gordon Tupper, No. 3 Coy, buried in Ecoivres. He is mentioned in Urquhart but his E-13 is not on Ancestry.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 6:51 am**

Brad,

I think that is the hinge of Mr. Christie's belief.

Why are these men missing? What happened?

A crater burial where Tupper was killed, "in front of the Vissec craters.", seems quite possible. Not that far away were the men from the 60th Battalion who were killed in 1916. Was there already a small burial ground close by?

As I understand it; ration bags were supplied to collect the personal items from the dead for repatriation to their families. The GRU 2 gang would be active and I do believe identifications were made.

The war diary for the 13th Battalion records that the battlefield was practically cleared by end of day: April 10, 1917. So, what happened after that? Did the guy with the paperwork get blasted by a shell? Did the burial ground also get churned up to the point where subsequent identification was impossible?

I think there are many different things that could have happened.

We have to ask, if the actual remains of the men from the 16th are in Nine Elms; how could they get there as "Unknowns"? Could that be easy to explain? Could a simple shell hit on a grave with 44 bodies in it render a positive identification for any of the remains impossible? Could that be the simple fact

that brought them into Nine Elms as "Unknowns" and had to be, regardless of how good the initial paperwork had been?

Maybe, if bodies get churned up and intermixed they just naturally fall into the "Unknown" category if only to avoid misidentification.

I think one can look around any number of cemeteries and, not finding men of the 16th Battalion, follow a path that promotes a belief that the bodies were never recovered. Ted's efforts at a forensic accounting follows a different path that asks if any "Unknown" could be one of the 16th Battalion boys. Once that avenue is open...the likelihood and probability of things begins to play a part.

But we still haven't cracked the code on CA.40...300 yards west of the main road...by a light rail line...

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## **Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 6:57 am**

Here is the end of the list of BR documents. They are colour coded to match the numbers. There may be a pattern in here.

This is the image of the orange tab on the spreadsheet. The top four in YELLOW are the ones that were found buried in Nine Elms with a CA40 address. When I see that they had no Kipling Memorial at Nine Elms (see post above) that added one more fact to the case. I think CA40 was a temporary burial depot where the men were collected, perhaps even covered with a thin layer of sheets and dirt, then moved off in the next day or two to a burial ground - CA39, CA6, CB10, Nine Elms.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Casualty Identification	Number	On Cross 9	CA40 List from Records	Christie FundRazr List	BR- Burial	BR - Relocation (* = no BR)	BR- Concentration	Reported Field Bu
2	WISDOM	16372				2249	2500	22597, 22772	51b.A.10.c.9.7
3	McNICOL	718887				2248	1976	2284	51b.A.10.c.9.7
4	DUNCAN	718675				2248	2499	10800	51b.A.10.c.9.7
5	BROWN	160741				2247	2398	1996	51b.A.10.c.9.7
6	ADAMOVICH	'736633'				*	*	VM	NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge in A10 to A11.b
7	ALLEN	'420819'	x	x	x (Allan)	2248	2286	3003 VM	KIA Farbus Woods: Grave No. CA40 Location
8	ARMITAGE	'625286'	x	x	x	2250	2497	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
9	ATTWOOD	'736569'	x	x	x	2247	2499	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 - grave n
10	BAGULEY	'718192'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	KIA FARBUS but reported at A.10.c.9.7 site
11	BALL	'700410'	x	x	x	2250	2497	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
12	BETHEL	'719115'				*	*	VM	NRB: MIA then KIA
13	BETTS	'736746'	x	x	x	2249	2499	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
14	BLAIK	'736108'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	KIA at Objective: but reported in CA40 as w
15	BONIVER	'871504'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	Nine Elms and A.10 listed
16	BRADSHAW	'43945'	x	x	x	2249	2497	21165 VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7, Mem. C
17	BROWN	'718661'	x			*	*	VM	"Memorial No. 9 to above and others" (not
18	CHANDLER	'28823'	x			*	*	VM	"Memorial No. 9 to above and others" (not
19	CLEMONS	'721564'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7
20	COOK	'872090'	x			*	*	VM	KIA and Vimy Memorial
21	COWPER	'420717'				*	*	VM	NRB: MIA then KIA (A.36 #10177)
22	CURLEY	'258460'	x			*	*	VM	NRB: attack on Vimy Ridge
23	DICKSON	'160168'	x	x	x	2249	2286	VM	KIA instant shell fire - CA40 listing as other
24	GIBBONS	'624801'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	CA40 listing as others
25	GLASSFORD	'722078'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	Registered 51b.A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine E
26	GOODING	'736317'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from
27	GORRIE	'718755'	x			*	*	VM	NRB: Attack on Vimy Ridge - machine gun f
28	HALLIDAY	'624957'	x			*	*	VM	NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
29	HAMILTON	'A/20408'	x	x	x	2250	2520	VM	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from
30	HARPER	'722256'				*	*	VM	NRB: attack near Vimy (A.645 Sh. 1 #20047)
31	HAWKINS	'736103'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51
32	HENDERSON	'105644'	x		x	*	*	VM	NRB: only lists Vimy Memorial
33	HOOPER	'736880'	x	x	x	2248	2287	VM	At Vimy Ridge 44a.A10.c.9.7 Grave No. C.A.4
34	HOWIE	'628188'	x	x	x	2247	2520	VM	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51
35	KILCUP	'832135'	x	x	x	2247	2530	VM	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
36	KIRBY	'718249'	x	x	x	2248	2530	VM	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c
37	LATIMER	'426344'	x		x	*	*	VM	Buried near where he fell in "No Man's Land
38	LAYCOCK	'70022'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 (A.652 #
39	LEITCH	'736651'	x	x	x	2248	2520	VM	CA40 at jump off
40	MANNING	'718699'	x	x	x	2250	2520	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus
41	MILNE, V.C.	'427586'	x	x	x	2247	2530	2530 VM	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (A
42	McCANDLESS	'736171'	x	x	x	2247	2287	VM	CA40 corrected to 51b
43	McCOWAN	'420765'	x	x	x	2247	2287	VM	CA40 corrected to 51b from attack southwe
44	McKAY	'736402'				*	*	VM	NRB: attack at Vimy Ridge (A.643 #30677)
45	McPHAIL	'426601'				*	*	VM	NRB: attack southeast of Neuville St.Vaast (
46	McWILLIAMS	'718526'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus
47	OWEN	'859684'	x	x	x	2249	2499	VM	Attack west of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.637 i
48	PARSONS	'624593'	x	x	x	2247	2508	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus
49	PATTISON	'718269'	x	x	x	2248	2499	VM	KIA at jump-off location: Corrected to 51b.A
50	PHILLIPS	'105741'	x	x	x	2248	2499	VM	KIA; west of Thelus corrected to 51b.A.10.c.
51	PIPER	'736967'	x	x	x	2250	2508	VM	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a
52	POWELL	'737084'	x	x	x	2247	2508	VM	KIA: 51b.A.10.c.9.7
53	PURNELL	'700967'	x	x		2249	2508	VM	KIA SE NSV 51b.A10.c.9.7
54	RUDDOCK	'129200'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - later corrected to 51b
55	SIMMONDS	'736075'				*	*	VM	NRB: (A.636 #43642)
56	SIMMONS	'77309'	x	x	x	2247	7852	VM	KIA: Neuville St.Vaast - Corrected to 51b.A.1
57	SNELGROVE	'624477'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
58	SPALDING	'874370'	x			*	*	VM	NRB: KIA
59	STRICKLER	'625303'	x	x	x	2248	2508	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
60	TALLMAN	'859301'				*	*	VM	NRB: MIA then KIA (A81 #46831)
61	TARLTON	'129336'	x	x		2247	2535	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b
62	WILLERTON	'719161'	x	x	x	2248	2250	VM	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - photo of memorial cross se
63	Total Column	57	49	40	40				

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 7:27 am**

The idea of CA.40 as a staging ground for collection of bodies, identification, registration fit ideas I have had.

I found myself entertaining this idea for some of the other, bigger, sites, like CA.39. Like small depots pending a bigger plan.

Nine Elms...

The cemetery was begun, after the capture of Vimy Ridge, by the burial in what is now Plot I, Row A of 80 men of the 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion, who fell on the 9th April 1917.

So, if our 16th Battalion guys go to Nine Elms...shouldn't the bulk of them be in certain rows as being buried by June 1917?

How does Milne wind up on the Vimy Memorial?

I must be missing a point, here?

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 8:26 am**

Richard,

I saw your post...

<http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto ... 00#p107814>

I think we should look at any site that is 300 yards west of the main road (Arras/les Tilleuls Road) and by a light rail line: there can't be many places that meet those qualifications. One of the boundary points (southeastern) for the 13th Battalion's "clean up" detail was A.16.b.7.4.

It's funny that the northwestern point is A.10.c.9.8.

Do we have to entertain that there were 2 CA.40's diametrically opposed?

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 11:51 am**

1. Tim - that location always caught my attention, as I wondered how the remains got back from the Commandants House (51b.B.7.d.55.15) or Farbus Post (a little further north). They are both on the rail line that goes back to within a short distance of Nine Elms.
2. Ted - if you sort the BR Codes then almost all the CA40 men are in the lists where the other four men found in Nine Elms are located - 2247, 2248, and 2249. Then we have the list under 2250 (8 men) and I bet somewhere we will find another Nine Elms resident that has that number. It may not be a member of the 16th Battalion. Remember we found Private Dingwall #730549 (1st Div. MGC) at that address. He was on BR 2249 with Wisdom, as a resident of CA39. Maybe I should check the other CA39 residents? **Answer: at the end of the list for Memorial Cross 13 we find that Caldwell and Robson of the 10th Battalion are on BR 2250 and 2251 respectively. Berry of the 5th Battalion is on 2251 with Robson and Dusang of the 1st Div MGC (as was Dingwall) in on 2250. A random pick of a CA39 15th Battalion man, Neely #802640 puts him on BR 2251 as well.** Are these sequential sheets showing when these bodies



were recovered? If so then maybe the next column is a sequential list of when they were concentrated. That would put my man Baguley in a pack with Clemons and Ruddock that were recovered at the same time and concentrated at the same time - just a thought, not even a theory at present.

The sorted spreadsheet is the one with the light orange tab. The links in the first column (names) are linked to the E-13 records.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Casualty Identification	Number	On Cross 9	CA40 List from Records	Christie FundRazr List	BR- Burial	BR - Relocation (* = no BR)	BR- Concentration	Reported Field Burial	Remains Recovered/Lost	Final
2	<a href="#">McCANDLESS</a>	'736171'	x	x	x	2247	2287	VM	CA40 corrected to 51b		
3	<a href="#">McCOWAN</a>	'420765'	x	x	x	2247	2287	VM	CA40 corrected to 51b from attack southwest of Vimy		
4	<a href="#">BROWN</a>	'160741'				2247	2398	1996	51b.A.10.c.9.7	C810 @ 51b.A.11.a.7.6	Nine
5	<a href="#">GIBBONS</a>	'624801'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	CA40 listing as others		
6	<a href="#">GLASSFORD</a>	'722078'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	Registered 51b.A.10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.637 #17557)		
7	<a href="#">GOODING</a>	'736317'	x	x	x	2247	2497	VM	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a not 51b.		
8	<a href="#">ATTWOOD</a>	'736569'	x	x	x	2247	2499	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 - grave not located		
9	<a href="#">PARSONS</a>	'624593'	x	x	x	2247	2508	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus		
10	<a href="#">POWELL</a>	'737084'	x	x	x	2247	2508	VM	KIA: 51b.A.10.c.9.7		
11	<a href="#">HOWIE</a>	'628188'	x	x	x	2247	2520	VM	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b		
12	<a href="#">KILCUP</a>	'832135'	x	x	x	2247	2530	VM	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c		
13	<a href="#">MILNE, V.C.</a>	'427588'	x	x	x	2247	2530	2530 VM	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A.10.c.9.7 (A.638 #3866)		
14	<a href="#">TARLTON</a>	'129336'	x	x		2247	2535	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b		
15	<a href="#">SIMMONS</a>	'77309'	x	x	x	2247	7852	VM	KIA: Neuville St Vaast - Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7		
16	<a href="#">McNICOL</a>	'718887'				2248	1976	2284	51b.A.10.c.9.7	C46 @ 51b.A.11.d.2.3	Nine
17	<a href="#">WILLERTON</a>	'719161'	x	x	x	2248	2250	VM	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - photo of memorial cross sent to family Vancouver, B.C.		
18	<a href="#">ALLEN</a>	'420819'	x	x	x (Allan)	2248	2286	3003 VM	KIA Farbus Woods: Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7		
19	<a href="#">BLAIR</a>	'736108'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	KIA at Objective: but reported in CA40 as well ??		
20	<a href="#">BONIVER</a>	'871504'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	Nine Elms and A.10 listed		
21	<a href="#">SHELROVE</a>	'624477'	x	x	x	2248	2286	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b		
22	<a href="#">HOOPER</a>	'736880'	x	x	x	2248	2287	VM	At Vimy Ridge 44a.A10.c.9.7 Grave No. C.A.40 (A.657 #7777)		
23	<a href="#">DUNCAN</a>	'718675'				2248	2499	10800	51b.A.10.c.9.7	descriptive only, same as C46	Nine
24	<a href="#">PATTISON</a>	'718269'	x	x	x	2248	2499	VM	KIA at jump-off location: Corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7		
25	<a href="#">PHILLIPS</a>	'105741'	x	x	x	2248	2499	VM	KIA; west of Thelus corrected to 51b.A.10.c.9.7		
26	<a href="#">STRICKLER</a>	'625303'	x	x	x	2248	2508	VM	36.c.A.10.c.9.7 - not corrected to 51b		
27	<a href="#">LEITCH</a>	'736651'	x	x	x	2248	2520	VM	CA40 at jump off		
28	<a href="#">KIRBY</a>	'718249'	x	x	x	2248	2530	VM	CA40 site changed to 51b from 36c		
29	<a href="#">DICKSON</a>	'160168'	x	x	x	2249	2286	VM	KIA instant shell fire - CA40 listing as others		
30	<a href="#">HAWKINS</a>	'736103'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	CA40 corrected from 36c to 44a and not 51b		
31	<a href="#">LAYCOCK</a>	'70022'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7 (A.652 #26803)		
32	<a href="#">McWILLIAMS</a>	'718526'	x	x	x	2249	2287	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus		
33	<a href="#">BRADSHAW</a>	'43945'	x	x	x	2249	2497	21165 VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7, Mem. Cross Nine Elms (A.636)		
34	<a href="#">BETTS</a>	'736746'	x	x	x	2249	2499	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7		
35	<a href="#">OWEN</a>	'859684'	x	x	x	2249	2499	VM	Attack west of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.637 #36966) - broken cross man		
36	<a href="#">WISDOM</a>	'16372'				2249	2500	22597, 22772	51b.A.10.c.9.7	CA39 @ 51b.A.11.c.3.0 - destroyed	Arra
37	<a href="#">PURNELL</a>	'700967'	x	x		2249	2508	VM	KIA SE NSV 51b.A10.c.9.7		
38	<a href="#">BAGULEY</a>	'718192'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	KIA FARBUS but reported at A.10.c.9.7 site		
39	<a href="#">CLEMONS</a>	'721564'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7		
40	<a href="#">RUDDOCK</a>	'129200'	x	x	x	2250	2286	VM	36c.A.10.c.9.7 - later corrected to 51b		
41	<a href="#">ARMITAGE</a>	'625286'	x	x	x	2250	2497	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7		
42	<a href="#">BALL</a>	'700410'	x	x	x	2250	2497	VM	Grave No. CA40 Location A10.c.9.7		
43	<a href="#">PIPER</a>	'736967'	x	x	x	2250	2508	VM	Attack southwest of Thelus 51b.A10.c.9.7 (a.639 #38619)		
44	<a href="#">HAMILTON</a>	'A/20408'	x	x	x	2250	2520	VM	CA40 at jump off but he gets corrected from 36c to 44a not 51b.		
45	<a href="#">MANNING</a>	'718699'	x	x	x	2250	2520	VM	CA40 attack west of Thelus		

**BRs: 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2287**

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 12:00 pm**

You betcha, Richard.

I had mentioned last Sunday in an update to a post that...

**ejwalshe wrote:**

That's another 10 unique 16th Bn men above, making **38 of the missing 41** on these five BRs.

**BRs: 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2287.**

🙄 look at all that work that must have been done consecutively in four BRs: 2247, 2248, 2249 & 2250



I think about that a lot, and it tells me they must have spent at least four days bringing these men in.

**Norm Christie wrote:**

...overlooked...

Overlooked? I beg to differ.

EDIT: Thanks, Richard (your post below)....make that 40 of 40. Perfect! 😊

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 12:09 pm**

I edited my post with more above. The reason you got 38 and not 40 is because 2 of the Christie names are incorrect ([delete Henderson and Latimer from the Christie list and use Tarlton and Purnell from the E-13 records](#)). These are the ones shaded rose.

2287 is a concentration BR and all the others are burial BRs.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 2:13 pm**

Richard,

I do not have a map that shows that rail line. Do I take it that this line ran from the railroad cutting on the eastern edge of Farbus, then back, west, passing just north of the nine elms (the actual trees) and on to a point 300 yards west of the Arras/les Tilleuls Road, presumably west to where? Did it pass through what would become Nine Elms Military Cemetery?

Actually I think I see it on this map...

[http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan ... collection](http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan...collection)

I see it contiguous from north of the Commandant's House running into track entering the eastern side of Thelus (A.12.d.9.9) and probably as public transit on the main East/West road through Thelus. There is a branch that heads south, out of Thelus at about A.12.b.1.2 and it seems to run in a sunken road (?). That track reaches a branch at about A.18.a.1.6 where one branch continues south where it stops about A.17.d.6.2 meeting Wittelsbacher Weg. The other branch (the one we are interested in) heads more westerly passing, as you pointed out, just about 175 yards north of the Nine Elms (trees) and runs into the Arras/les Tilleuls Road at what was known as "The Culvert" at A.17.a.1.5. One can discern that this rail line keeps on westerly to just a bit west of the main road (300 yards?) and seems to stop at about A.16.b.9.6.

I think, if one considers all the factors that are in play...this is a VERY likely spot to have transported fallen soldiers to. The rail line runs right out to Long Wood at B.14.b.10.4 which is just south of Farbus Wood and Willerval. I see it as a very good candidate for what the CWGC describes. It is very handy to what would become Nine Elms Military Cemetery and is on the "other side of the road" from CA.39 as it should be per instructions we have seen.

[http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan ... collection](http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islan...collection)

[Can anyone find the citation for that?](#) Richard found it, see above. Thanks, Richard.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 2:42 pm**



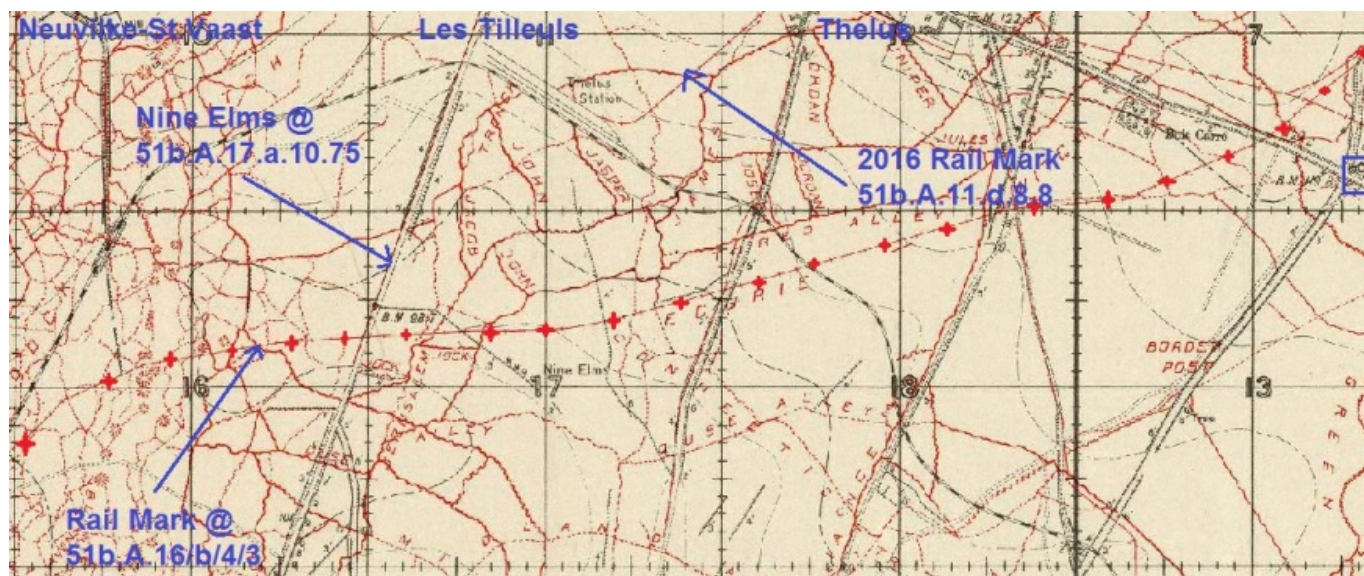
**McTague wrote:**

I do not have a map that shows that rail line.

A year or so ago we spent a great deal of time looking at ALL THE AREAS where the rail lines met the CWGC criteria. If I recall correctly, the site in the report at **51b.A.11.d.8.8** was the preferred site, as it was close to a strong-point/depot, a trench, images on the 1918 aerial views and clear markings on current GE images. I have marked all of these on the map below.

This is the map of the area in the post above:

**51bNW Roclincourt 8a OS July 1918 08/07/1918 : wo297\_1168.ecw**



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 2:50 pm**

I did remember all that work.

I still think it's a good idea to consider it after looking it over.

The tracks seem to have existed before the battle and they run right where the 1st Division was gaining ground. Very close to CA.39?

It also is almost right on top of the southeastern point of the 13th Battalion's "clean up" area...A.16.b.7.4

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 13, 2017 3:18 pm**

**rlaughton wrote:**

Thanks Brad - too bad the 16th History is not on archive.org in other formats - at least I could not find it! That version at Calgary is tough to read.

Here is a clear version:

# **The History of the 16th Battalion (the Canadian Scottish) Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War 1914-1919, H. M. Urquhart, D.S.O., M.C., A.D.C.**

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All times are UTC-04:00  
Page **24** of **30**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page **25** of **30**

by **McTague**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 9:10 am**

Richard,

Reading over your post and looking at the map...

[http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto ... 45#p108014](http://www.cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewto...45#p108014)

I can see that the position (A.16.b.9.6.) I **used to (see next posts)** believe "rings all the bells" of the CWGC has not been considered on the map you present but you state that you have considered **ALL THE AREAS where the rail lines met the CWGC criteria.**

The map I have been working from pre-dates the actual day of the attack and is dated to March of 1917.

Yours is from July 1918, so may show features that were improvements, after the battle.

If I consider my position, though, it imposes something on the narrative; how does moving the men from my position to the newly created Nine Elms Military Cemetery result in so much confusion that even Milne goes missing...let alone all the rest?

From the Nine Elms MC site from the CWGC...

The cemetery was begun, after the capture of Vimy Ridge, by the burial in what is now Plot I, Row A of 80 men of the 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion, who fell on the 9th April 1917; and this and the next row were filled by June 1917. Three burials were made in Plot I, Row C, in July 1918. The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including:-

Do we have to consider who might have been "transferred" to the new Nine Elms MC by June of 1917, along with 80 men of the 14th Battalion...accept that Rows A and B were filled by then and only 3 more admissions in July of 1918...all others being interred after the Armistice?

I count 74 graves available in rows 1A and 1B using Ted's schematic of Nine Elms MC. I see the first burials for men from the 16th as the first 5 after the three that are stated to have been the last burials (July 1918) to have occurred before, at least, November 11, 1918.

If I accept this timeline, I have to embrace the fact that the bodies in whatever (wherever) CA.40 was, remained there from about April 10, 1917 to about April 10, 1919 (no digging around on battlefields in winter) and possibly longer. So at least two years.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

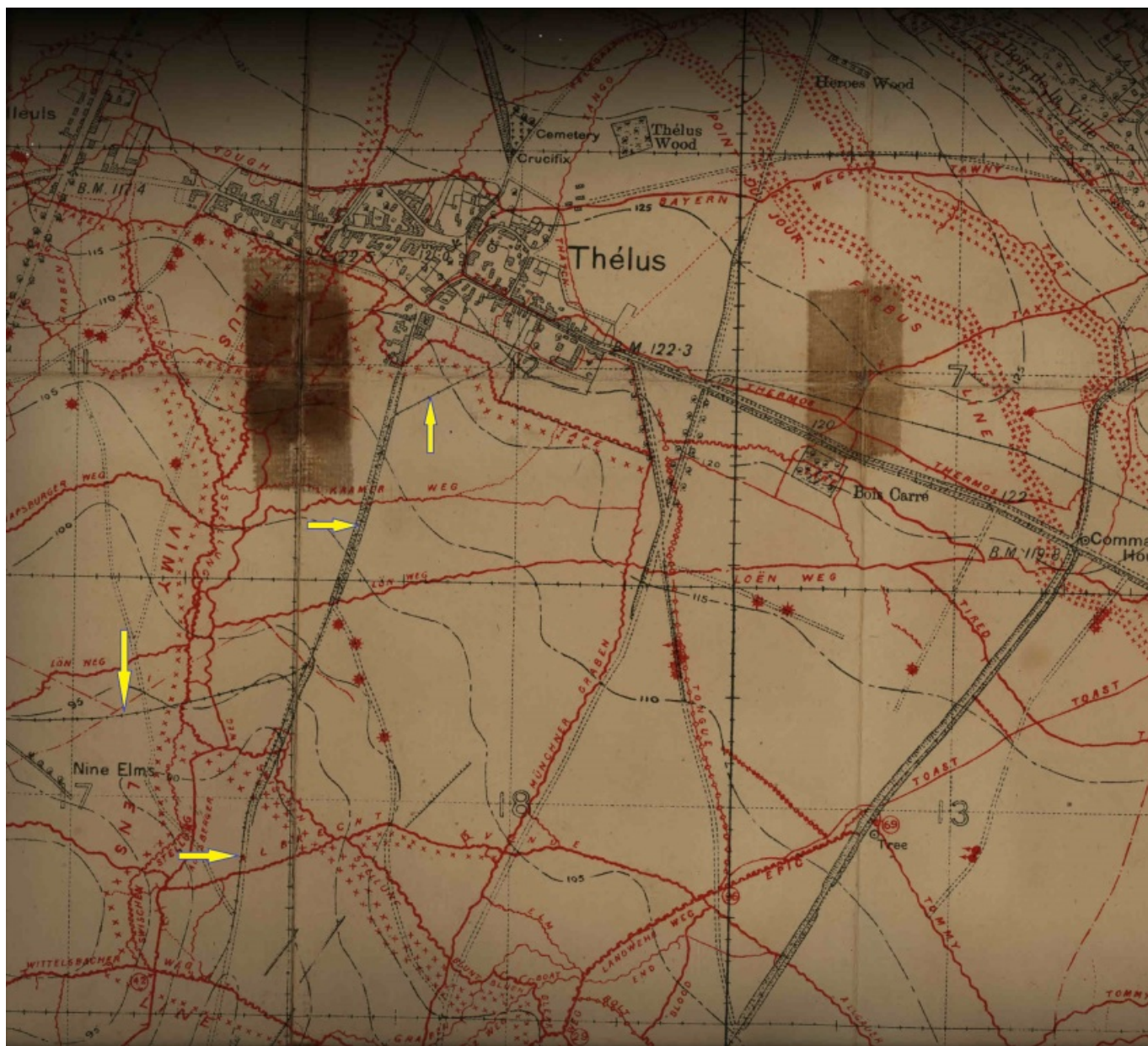
by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 12:40 pm**



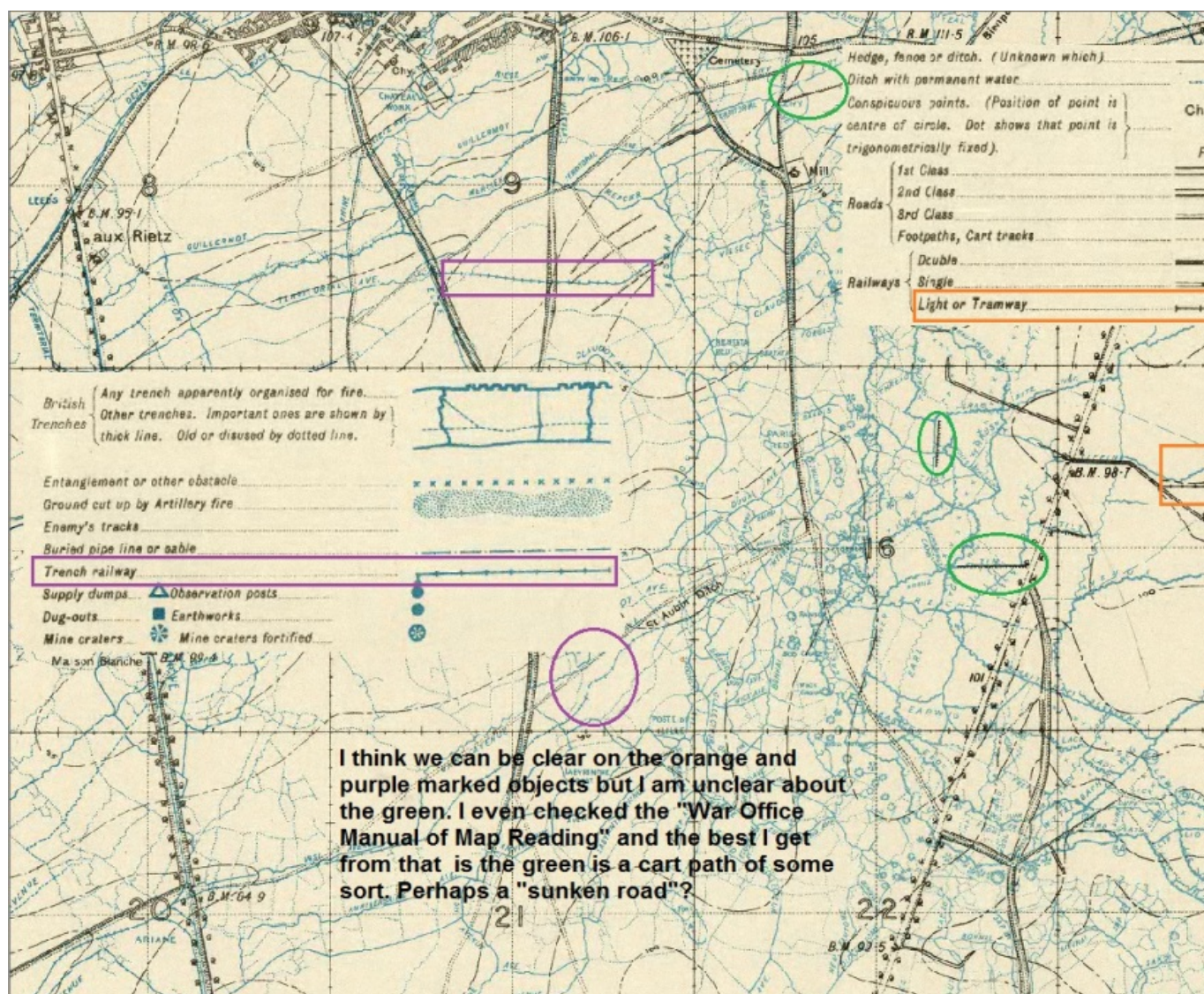
Sorry Tim, I must be missing something? If the CA40 address is "274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track" (300 yards) then it is 6 hash marks west of **51b.A.17.0.3** which is the place I marked on the map at **51b.A.16.b.4.3**.

I pulled out my grandfather's map that he carried with him on 9 April 1917 and it shows a light rail line from Thelus, which cuts across 51b.A.17 and ends at **51b.A.17.a.5.4**. I believe I posted that map, as we were looking at whether it was possible they meant the Roclincourt-Thelus road rather than the Arras-Lille road. I found it with the MediaFire search engine, not sure which post it was in: (yellow arrows are the rail line)



I looked to the west of that on the original map and it appears to follow the Nine Elms Road out past the road to Thelus and then extends out the your location at **51b.A.16.b.9.6**. That is very close to CA3. I went back and looked at the DVD version wo297\_1166.ecw and it is there as well. Although the map was for another purpose (symbols) that shows here:





There are all in the GE OVERLAY RAILWAYS folder.

In the 2016 analysis of the rail options, Brad may have pulled some other maps and aerial photographs.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 2:48 pm**

Yeah, I do see that now. My position is nowhere near a full 300 yards west of the Arras/les Tilleuld Road, sorry. It's a little less than half that distance. I do remember your grandfather's map with the marked up arrows now that I see it again, sorry.

I actually scaled it from the scale on the map I was using, with dividers, and it is plainly short.

I still wonder about CA.40, regardless of where it was, being around for two years before the guys from the 16th Battalion made it into Nine Elms MC.

I guess, when you think of it, we don't know when the statement from the CWGC was made so the period of the light railway may be in question as well...but the 300 yards would seem to be the same over time.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 3:38 pm**

Tim:

I have put the extracted text of Chapter 15 here at a new post so not to clog this topic:

16th B. Chapter 15 of Urquhart - extracted text - at Vimy

Richard

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 3:56 pm**

I have just reviewed that, a couple of days ago. Tupper's death, and his letter home were memorable.

There are a great set of appendices at the end of the book with lots of data on casualties that need a look.

There is no mention of any feeling that men were lost at burial spots due to incompetence or mistakes...no mention of CA.40.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Fri Jul 14, 2017 4:14 pm**

### *McTague wrote:*

I guess, when you think of it, we don't know when the statement from the CWGC was made so the period of the light railway may be in question as well...but the 300 yards would seem to be the same over time.

According to David Avery (Commemorations @ CWGC Maidenhead) the wording that you see on the web site is from the ORIGINAL REGISTERS at the CWGC Cemeteries. He told me that after I pointed out some errors (forget which cemetery) and he said they don't change the wording, as that was what was written at that time and it is therefore historic.

I had suggested that maybe there could be a separate section at the end of the text where notes could be posted when errors were found or significant new information became available. I had assumed it was much more recent than the period stated, given that the measurements were given in metres and not yards. My guess is that they used "controlled moderation" of the text. 🙄

Our best estimate for Nine Elms, one we discussed, was that the text was written in 1922 since the last concentrations were made in June of 1921. You will see from the COG-BR dates that the vast majority of concentrations were made in April-June 1921.

They would have thus made their report on the basis of what was "on the ground" in 1921 not what was there in 1917.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 15, 2017 8:07 am**

### The Doyle Corollary

The middle of the night often brings forward questions. I have two for this Saturday morning:

1. COG-BR document 2618051 has previously been discussed in some detail. We do not know if all the men in graves 4.B.1 to 4.B.20 and then 4.D.1 to 4.D.4 came from **51b.A.11.c.3.0**, which we know to be the 15th Battalion Burial Ground known as **CA39**. Are they all men from that CA39 location? The evidence in favour of this is:

- a. The men are all listed on that page in a group, as on many other pages of the COG-BR where they were found in the same location. Granted there are no "ditto" marks but also there are no other coordinates listed.
- b. The first listing at the top of the page is a CA39 address, although the remains were not identified. Also on that page is WEAVER (not WEARER) who was 15th Battalion and likely would be found at CA39. Below him is PARK, who has no burial coordinates and then BRADLEY, who was listed at CA39 at **51b.A.11.c.3.0**, the same coordinates as at the top of the page.

As noted elsewhere in this topic, this either presents us with a problem or with a solution. If the men are 15th Battalion men from CA39 then they have more than one stone in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, as they are all in the Memorial Row for the Arras Road Cemetery, Thelus (not the existing Arras Road Cemetery, Roclincourt). That would mean that CA39 was not destroyed to the extent described by the CWGC, resulting in many of the 15th Battalion men being concentrated into Nine Elms. This is inferred on many of their E-13 documents, as they are marked as EXHUMED and then CANCELLED. If this is not the case, then we can release all those graves for assignment to men of the 16th Battalion. That one page alone provides 20 possible locations, if we eliminate 4.B.1, 4.B.9, 4.D.1 and 4.D.3.

2. I have promoted the idea that in the case of **CA40** that we are only looking for 40 men, given that four (4) of the listed CA40 candidates were found at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** and concentrated to the Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension, as shown by COG-BR 2020936. The problem is that the CWGC clearly says "*Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917*". When we checked all the E-13 records for the 16th Battalion men we came up with only 40 listed as having reference to the CA40 site. My flaw was that I assumed it was 40 not 44 because they had already found the 4 that went to Lievin. We have included those 4 on the list, such as in the case of OWEN, the only name that survived on the broken battlefield cross. Clearly, the CWGC must have known that 4 more of the men on our spreadsheet list of 57 (now 61) casualties, 49 (now 50) of whom are on the surviving Cross 9, must have been on the CA40 list. Logic tells us that those 4 men who were listed as being buried at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 (CA40) but were found elsewhere WISDOM (CA39 -Arras Road Memorial), McNICOL (CA 6 in 1.D.3), DUNCAN (CA6 in 1.G.39) and BROWN (CB10 in 4.C.1). I cannot explain why only BROWN is on the Memorial Cross and not the other three? They are clearly the missing 4 men that changes the list from 40 back to 44, as per the CWGC. I have updated the spreadsheet accordingly.

Here is what I think may have happened, which if true, becomes the "*Doyle Corollary*" to the CWGC factual statement (thus assumed to have been proven), that the men were concentrated from CA40 to the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

- The 16th Battalion left the Bentata Subway and headed into the German front lines. Their objectives were "Black Line" (Zwölfer Weg A.11.a,c), "Red Line" (Swischen Stellung A.11.b,d), "Blue Line" (Chain Trench - east of Thelus) and the "Brown Line" (final objective on the east side of the ridge - near Farbus). As I recall, they held at the RED LINE. The first large group of casualties occurred in the area between the Claudot and Vissec groups of craters. Those men were gathered at or about **51b.A.10.c.9.7** (the start of CA40) and covered with groundsheets, or perhaps even sheets and a fine layer of earth. This became the first "temporary morgue" or "burial site" for the 16th Battalion.
- The next large group of casualties occurred as they approached the Visener Graben, on the west side of the Arras-Lens Road, pressing forward to the "Black Line" (Zwölfer Weg). It was here there were many casualties from hand-to-hand combat and the German machine guns, which Private Milne silences to earn his Victoria Cross. As in the first point above, those killed in this area were collected and placed in a temporary site (spot), either by their own comrades or by the 13th Battalion burial parties. Some were most likely lost for some years in the mud and shell holes of the battlefield.



- The last group of casualties for the 16th Battalion would have been where they held up at the "Red Line" (Swischen Stellung), in the area southeast of Les Tilleuls and southwest of Thellus. This is in sector 51b.A.11 where we find both **CA37** and **CA39**. It is also here that we find what we presented in March 2016 as the 16th Battalion Burial Ground at **51b.A.11.d.8.8**, 150 yards on the east side of the Red Line. This location is 300 yards west of the main road into Thelus (not the Arras-Lens Road) on the light railway track. We believe this to be **CA40**.
- In the days that followed, the men of the 16th Battalion were classed as spectators, as the other units pushed forward. We know from Urquhart's text that components saw action and there were more casualties. He says *"The 16th Battalion had its share of the 3rd Brigade's work and losses. It held the outpost line, dug trenches, was employed on road making, was involved in the two reliefs when the enemy shelled and gassed to such purpose, and during the Arleux and Fresnoy operations was attached to the attacking brigades. In the former action two platoons were engaged with the enemy. The whole of the unit came under heavy artillery fire in close support in the Arleux loop; in consequence it suffered eighty-four casualties, including three officers killed and two wounded."*
- It is now time to clean-up the battlefield and collect the men of the 16th Battalion. They are gathered at the site where the main force is located at the Red Line in the **51b.A.11** sector. Men are brought forward to this area from the loses at the Black Line and men are brought back from the loses near Farbus. We know that ALLEN and BAGULEY had to have been brought back, presumably on the "light rail line". Wounded would be going back as well, to Mont St. Eloy and elsewhere. Supplies would be being brought forward on the return trip, along with the dead to be buried in the Battalion Burial Grounds. A large number of those arrived from a place labelled as the 16th Battalion casualties from **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. At that time it was not called **CA40**, as that did not yet exist.
- In the days, weeks and months that followed, the new cemeteries became the sites of the burial concentrations. Three of the largest groups that would come from Sector **51b.A.11** were the 15th Battalion men from **CA39**, the 13th from **CA37** and the mixed group of 52 from **CB10**. With them also came a large group of men from the 16th Battalion from a burial ground known as **CA40**, a place in close proximity to **CA39** but one that had the wrong coordinates based on the first large group all marked as being from **51b.A.10.c.9.7**. Remember, the CWGC never gave that as the coordinates for CA40, as it does not appear on any of the COG-BR documents. That was an addition made by a clerk or clerks unknown who created a great number of repetitive, and incorrect, E-13 Grave Registration documents. As others have said here *"oh, okay, a 16th Battalion man - that is CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7"*.
- 100 years later we find that we have a mixture of men from **CA39** (15th Battalion) and **CA40** (16th Battalion) in various graves in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Whatever destruction of the battalion battlefields there was in April-May 1917, we don't know. Perhaps parts of **CA39** and **CA40**, lying in close proximity, were destroyed. What remains in Nine Elms Military Cemetery are those that were lost in battle but their graves survived thereafter. They were all collected from the 51b.A.11 sector, no longer identifiable, yet they may have been when they were placed there initially.

Note: I have edited this and corrected a few typos and other errors. There may be more!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **15thBnCEF**

Posted: **Sun Jul 16, 2017 11:47 am**

Richard,

I have been following all the posts regarding possible locations for **CA40** on the CEFSG forum.

Some of the latest ones discussed tramways, tracks, etc and how their locations might provide clues to **CA40**.

I recalled coming across the Work Reports of the 3rd Field Company for 13 April 1917 while we were trying to pinpoint the location of the **CA35** 15th Battalion Vimy cross. The only known period



photograph of the cross in location shows a lorry in the background which suggested the presence of road or at least a track and we were puzzled as to which track that might be.

The Engineer report clearly states (by way of the map references for the track) that a mule track ran close to CA 35 from the Douai trench towards Nine Elms. It was not passable by vehicles/wagons at that point (13 Apr) but could have been 'improved' in the days after. The photograph of the cross at CA35 had to have been taken at some point after at least 5 May as Lt Munroe was KIA on that date and his name appears at the top of the cross.

Maybe some of the other references to tracks, tramways, dumps etc in their Work Reports might help with CA40?

Maybe you could post here the digital scan of that specific page from the Work Report I sent you?

*APPENDIX - No.*

WORK REPORTS.

Day 13th. April 1917.

**OVERLAND ROUTE.** 31 sappers from 1 am to 3 pm. Widening ELBE BRIDGE and improving Route Westward of ELBE.

(Sgd) R.A. Bolton, Lieut.

35 sappers from 2.30 am to 12.30 pm.  
10 men of 13th battn. from 12.30 am to 12.30 pm.  
improving Overland Route at A.18.b.4.6. and A.18.b.9.5.

(Sgd) W.J. MacKenzie, Lt.

**WATER SUPPLY.** 1 W.C.O. from 1 am to 4 pm. Lowering the 3" line under OVERLAND ROUTE at the Junction of SABBEN and ELBE.

4 sappers from 3 am to 4 pm. Working on 3" in 3rd Division Area.

(Sgd) A.L. Cummings, Lieut.

3 W.C.O.'s and 14 sappers from 3 am to 4 pm. Carrying from BESSAN DUMP to RAILWAY TRACK. Carried the following material:-  
25 coils barbed wire.  
5 bundles small screw stakes.  
15 pick shafts.

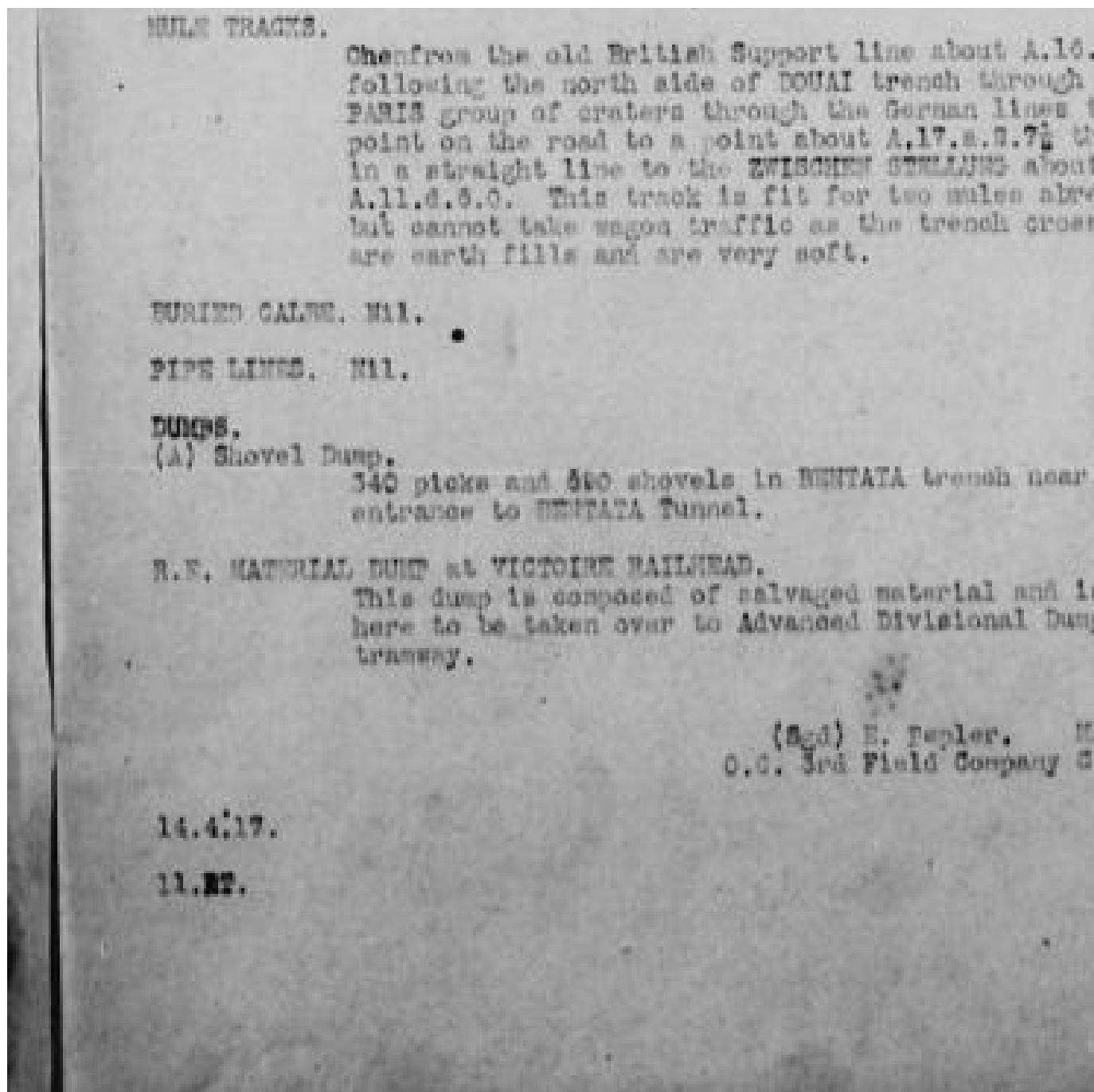
(Sgd) K.B. Bonnell, 1

-----000-----

1st Canadian Divisional Engineers.

Reference your 3-0 of the 13th inst..

**NEW ROADS.** Nil.



## Exhumation By IWGC - General File

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 1:28 pm**

Rob, Section 5: Graves and Cemeteries, pp. 45, of Work Of The Commission In Connection With First World War Deaths contain complaints which reminded me of your questions in this regard:

- Complaint from Australian Graves Service that insufficient effort was being made to identify exhumed bodies, 17 and 24 Oct. 1921.
- Letters complaining at official failure to identify bodies discovered during reconstruction work in Somme area, 17 Mar., 3 Apr., 23 May 1922.

I am trying to find any references to the Burial Returns which we seek in these documents...more specifically, if they exist and where they are located today.

## Concentration of scattered graves into Hooze Crater

by **ejwalshe**Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 1:36 pm**

I said they made a mistake in exhuming CA40 and should have left it like Zivy and Lichfield...when they realized the mistake is of interest, and this quotation is from March 1921 re Hooze:

**CWGC pp. 81 wrote:**

Main topics: investigation into exhumations at Hooze Crater Cemetery; concentration of scattered graves into Hooze Crater by army labour company. and resulting mistakes in the marking of graves revealed by subsequent exhumations.

## Section 7B: France And Belgium: 273 WG 1294/3/2

by **ejwalshe**Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 2:04 pm**

Anyone visiting CWGC Maidenhead, please look this up:

**pp.79 Section 7B: France And Belgium wrote:**

Envelope containing sketch maps of areas of operation of exhumation units, with letter, 19 May 1921.

## Comprehensive Report (A) of Headstone Inscriptions

by **ejwalshe**Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 4:08 pm**

First of more than 100 pages in the archive...tweak the end of the URL number to find the others.

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 141304.JPG>

Contract: \_\_\_\_\_ Address of \_\_\_\_\_

**Graves**

Schedule "A" P  
Name of C  
SINE  
To be sten  
headstones below  
abbreviated thus  
HI

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (A) OF HEADSTONE INSCRIPTIONS**  
to this report is attached  
**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (B) HEADSTONE TEXTS**  
(those headstones to be inscribed with texts are underlined)  
and  
**TWO STANDARD LAYOUTS** (the layouts to be used are quoted on the badge design).

*546*  
*Woods Line Arms Hk*  
*Richworth*  
*Wesphire*

Badge Design No. and Layout No.	1st Line  Number and Rank.	2nd Line  Initials, NAME and Honours.	3rd Line  Regiment.	4th Line  Date of Death.	Age	Centre of Stone.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1202/1A	<i>42776</i> A/BOMBARDIER	J. ALLEN	CANADIAN FIELD ARTILLERY	7TH MAY	1917	NONE CROSS
1202/1A	712115 PRIVATE	L. LE CLAIR	14TH BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE CROSS
1202/1A	749036 PRIVATE	C. J. WILCOX	14TH BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 36 NONE
1202/1P/A	{ 797116 PRIVATE	B.J. WEST	14TH BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 19
	{ 797131 PRIVATE	A.A. WEST	14TH BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 27
1202/1P/A	488976 PRIVATE	J.W. SUTHERBURG	AS W.J. WALLACE (FOR P. FIGURES OF LAYOUT INSCR. ETC. SEE SC			

1202/1A	457319	PRIVATE	G. J.	TAYLOR	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	CROSS
1202/1A	823747	PRIVATE	G.	TAYLOR	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	NONE
1202/1A	841644	PRIVATE	W.C.	TURBER	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	NONE
1202/1A	797175	PRIVATE	P.J.	SMITH	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	CROSS
1202/1A	4	SOLDIER	64	OF THE GREAT WAR	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917		CROSS
1202/1A	889863	PRIVATE	F.	CHIRCO	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	NONE
1202/1A	889854	PRIVATE	A.S.	SIMPSON	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	NONE
1202/1A	749262	PRIVATE	WILBERT T. SEALE	40	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 26	CROSS
1202/1A	796030	PRIVATE	R.L.	SCOTT	14TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 22	CROSS

**NOTE:** Stone Nos. 5, 9, and 13 are not being used.

A special LAYOUT is provided for use with this Headstone.

These headstones are not to be executed until further orders.

Proof Checked.  
Final Check No. 1.  
Office Copy Prepared.  
Final Check No. 2.

1917 W.D. & H.O. WILLS LTD. LONDON

There may be an Easter Egg in here.

I have not read them all yet....doing so now.

**? Question:** Why the notice on some pages "Stone No's. 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41 & 45 are not being used"

**EDIT:** Badge Design No. 1202 means a Canadian Emblem will adorn the top of the grave marker.

## Holy Catnip Batman

by ejwalshe

Posted: Mon Jul 17, 2017 4:25 pm

No. of Contract \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of Firm \_\_\_\_\_

**Imperial War Graves Commission.**

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (A) OF HEADSTONE INSCRIPTIONS**

to this report is attached

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (B) HEADSTONE TEXTS**

(those headstones to be inscribed with texts are underlined)

and

**TWO STANDARD LAYOUTS** (the layouts to be used are quoted on the badge design).

Schedule "A" F

Name of \_\_\_\_\_

**NINE ELMS**

To be seen headstones below abbreviated thus:

**NINE EL.**

Badge Design No. and Layout	1st Line	2nd Line	3rd Line	4th Line	Centre of Stone



No.	Number and Rank.	Initials, NAME and Honours.	Regiment.	Date of Death.	Age.	Relig. Emb.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1202/1A 15601	PRIVATE	E. DESMOND	CANADIAN CAVALRY M.G. SQDN.	25TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1250/2A 32828	PRIVATE	R. MC ARTHUR	ROYAL Scots	25TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1076/1A 46879	PRIVATE	S.C. ASHLEY	ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS	25TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1011/1A 244190	PRIVATE	W.C. WALKER	CHESSIRE REGIMENT	24TH MAY 1917	AGE 22	CROSS	1
1202/1A 181108	PRIVATE	A.C. MC KINNON	16TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1202/1G 6A	SOLDIER	OF THE GREAT WAR	16TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	23RD MAY 1917	<del>NONE</del>	CROSS	1
1006/1A 253109	PRIVATE	S. FINNIE	ARG. & SUTH'D HIGHERS.	23RD MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1006/1A 253983	PRIVATE	T.D. GRAHAM	ARG. & SUTH'D HIGHERS.	21ST MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1077/1A 03270	SUB-CONDUCTOR	F. ROCHE	ROYAL ARMY ORDNANCE CORPS	21ST MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1186/2E 71695	CORPORAL	T.C. SLATTER	ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY	20TH MAY 1917	AGE 26	CROSS	1
1123/1A 4556	PRIVATE	W.P. FRENCH	19TH ROYAL HUSSARS	20TH MAY 1917	AGE 26	CROSS	1
1123/1C 5558	LANCE CPL	G.R. WIGGS	19TH ROYAL HUSSARS	20TH MAY 1917	AGE 26	CROSS	1
1123/1B 16391	PRIVATE	R. CALDER	19TH ROYAL HUSSARS	20TH MAY 1917	AGE 31	CROSS	1
1123/1A 185	PRIVATE	W. THORNEHILL	19TH ROYAL HUSSARS	20TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1
1123/1A 10042	PRIVATE	G.A.H. CARROLL	19TH ROYAL HUSSARS	19TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS	1

Proof Checked.  
Final Check No. 1.  
Office Copy Prepared.  
Final Check No. 2.

These headstones are not to be executed until further orders.

My prior analysis attributed Plot 1 Row B Grave 12 to the 16th Bn, only by proximity of McKinnon in Grave 11.

We can now POSITIVELY identify Plot 1 Row B Grave 12 as 16th Bn due to reference in the document above.

How many more can we find? Stay tuned, same Bat-channel.

OMG

No. of Contract \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of Firm \_\_\_\_\_

## Imperial War Graves Commission.

Schedule "A"

Name of \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (A) OF HEADSTONE INSCRIPTIONS**

to this report is attached

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (B) HEADSTONE TEXTS**

(those headstones to be inscribed with texts are underlined)

and

**TWO STANDARD LAYOUTS** (the layouts to be used are quoted on the badge design).

NINE ELMS  
To be st  
headstones bel  
abbreviated thu  
NINE EL.

Badge Design No. and Layout No.	1st Line Number and Rank.	2nd Line Initials, NAME and Honours.	3rd Line Regiment.	4th Line Date of Death. <small>In any instance where the entry "NONE" appears in Col. 4, the Age will be quoted from the Headstone and the Date of Death omitted laterally.</small>	Age	Centre of Stone Relig. Mark.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1190/1D 63	SECOND LIEUTENANT	R.C. HODSON	ROYAL ENGINEERS	8TH MAY 1917	AGE 29	CROSS
1186/2A 40	21577 GUNNER	H. ARMITAGE	ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY	8TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS
1186/2A 52	79015 GUNNER	H.V. GARRATT	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	8TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS
1084/1A 52	28446 PRIVATE	W. THOMPSON	ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGT.	7TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS
1186/2A 48	19495 GUNNER	W. HOWARD	ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY	17TH MAY 1917	NONE	CROSS
1186/2B 56	375264 GUNNER	R. FLETT	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	16TH MAY 1917	AGE 23	CROSS
1186/2A 50	60202 GUNNER	N. CHORLTON	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	16TH JULY 1918	AGE 24	CROSS
1186/2B 63	120372 SERJEANT	W.J. CUTBERT	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	16TH JULY 1918	AGE 34	CROSS
1186/2A 64	108003 GUNNER	G.E. BONNER	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	16TH JULY 1918	NONE	CROSS
1202/10 53	A SOLDIER	OF THE GREAT WAR	A CANADIAN REGIMENT			CROSS
1202/10 53	A SOLDIER	OF THE GREAT WAR	A CANADIAN REGIMENT			CROSS
1202/10 52	A SOLDIER	OF THE GREAT WAR	CANADIAN SCOTTISH			CROSS
1202/10 52	A SOLDIER	OF THE GREAT WAR	CANADIAN SCOTTISH			CROSS
1202/1A 50	772016 PRIVATE	P.A. BALFOUR	1ST BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL 1917	NONE	CROSS
1202/1A 46	417984 PRIVATE	A. RUD	16TH BN. CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL 1917	NONE	CROSS

Proof Checked.  
Final Check No. 1.  
Office Copy Prepared.





**Plot IV Row B 1-8, Plot IV Row B 10-20, Plot IV Row C 1-3**

Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 7:19 pm**

This graphic below tells me the 23 men in Plot IV Row B 1-8, Plot IV Row B 10-20, Plot IV Row C 1-3 are extremely high candidates to be 16th Bn missing. I will cede the likelihood that a couple may be of the 15th persuasion...but no more than that, given the number of missing 15th Bn.

Other pages from these documents also reveal the men in Plot I Row C Graves 4-11 are likely to be 16th Bn, and scattered graves in Plot IV (Row D 2, 13; Row E 6, 11, 14-17, 20; Row F 7; Row R 1-2), and especially **Plot V Row A 13-14** are strong candidates to be 16th Bn.

Either way, and on either end so-to-speak, once again, there are actually more than enough highly likely graves to be considered.

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680&start=360&view=print>

1202/1A		1202/1B		1202/1C		1202/1A		1202/1A		1202/1A	
1202/1A	49	213166	PRIVATE	T.	HUGHES	19TH BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	CROSS	
1202/1C	55	59755	PRIVATE	D.	O'DONOVAN	21ST BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 33	CROSS	
1202/1A	57	636225	PRIVATE	C.H.	BROTHWELL	21ST BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	AGE 30	CROSS	
1202/1A	54	636455	PRIVATE	K.E.	SOMERVILLE	21ST BN.CANADIAN INF.	9TH APRIL	1917	NONE	CROSS	

Proof Checked.  
Final Check No. 1.  
Office Copy Prepared.  
Final Check No. 2.

1202/1A 54 636455 PRIVATE K.E. SOMERVILLE 21ST BN.CANADIAN INF. 9TH APRIL 1917 NONE CROSS

**Note:** The page link below tells us the last page in the COG-folder is indeed, the last page of the file, and no pages are missing beyond this point, [http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d ... 141394.JPG](http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/d...141394.JPG), because the next URL in the sequence + 2 returns a 404-page.



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page **26** of **30**

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 10:14 pm**

Interesting find. I wonder about the soldier in Plot 1 Row B Grave 12 - Died in May, 2017 so had a date of death but not a name - strange. I don't think he can be considered part of the original 44 if the date of death does no match.

Kee digging!

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Mon Jul 17, 2017 10:23 pm**

Good stuff, Ted.

A. Rud, #417984, seems as Scottish as one could get... 🤔

[http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/m ... ber=606238](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/m...ber=606238)

I would love to see his service file..maybe by September.

His service file is now online at this link.

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 18, 2017 6:16 am**

We are now officially going in circles. I went through all of those some time ago and posted the list.

The Headstone Register for Nine Elms Military Cemetery was posted to the MediaFire site on May 2, 2016:

[http://www.mediafire.com/file/yaaq3blxl ... Binder.pdf](http://www.mediafire.com/file/yaaq3blxl...Binder.pdf)

Remember also that all the pages are available in the ZIP BINDER:

[https://www.mediafire.com/folder/acua1b ... y\\_Cemetery](https://www.mediafire.com/folder/acua1b...y_Cemetery)

Plot	Row	Grave	Multi	P16?	Location
1	B	12		*	n/a
1	C	4			51b.A.16.a.9.9
1	C	5			51b.A.16.b.3.8
1	C	6		*	51b.A.10.d.2.4
1	C	7		*	51b.A.10.d.0.0
1	C	10		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41
1	C	11		*	51b.A.10.d.20.41

1	C	13			51b.A.17.a.9.0
1	C	14			51b.A.17.a.9.0
1	C	19	dual		51b.A.17.c.8.7
1	C	28			51b.A.17.b.6.0
1	C	34		*	51b.A.11.d.2.9
1	D	10			51b.A.16.X.70.45
1	D	11			51b.A.16.c.6.4
1	D	12			51b.A.16.c.6.4
1	D	13			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	14			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	15			51b.A.16.c.3.4
1	D	16			51b.A.16.b.9.3
1	D	17			51b.A.16.c.4.7
1	D	20			51b.A.16.b.1.1
1	D	21			CA1 51b.A.16.d.3.4
1	D	40			CA24 51b.A.16.d.3.4
1	E	7		*	51b.A.10.d.3.5
1	E	8		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	9		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	10		*	51b.A.10.d.18.10
1	E	11		*	57b.A.10.a.2.8
1	G	7			51b.A.16.b.1.9
1	G	8			51b.A.16.b.1.9
1	G	9		*	51b.A.10.d.2.0
1	G	10		*	51b.A.10.d.2.0
1	G	14		*	51b.A.10.c.6.3
1	G	17		*	51b.A.10.65.01
1	G	18		*	51b.A.10.65.01
1	G	19			51b.A.16.c.8.7
1	G	22		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	23		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	27		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	31		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	32		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	33		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	34		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	35		*	CA2 51b.A.10.3.5
1	G	36			51b.A.16.b.1.0
1	G	37		*	51b.A.10.d.2.6
1	G	38		*	51b.A.10.d.2.6

1	G	40		*	?
3	C	2		*	51b.A.11.b.2.0
3	C	3		*	51b.A.11.b.25.90
3	C	6		*	51b.A.11.a.9.9
4	C	9		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	C	10		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	D	11		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	4		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	6		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	10		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
4	E	17		*	CB10 51b.A.11.a.7.6
		58		37	TOTALS ROW

This is the list of the 44 men based on the records, which added in the 6 men not on the Christie list and removing the 2 he had on his list in error. Finding Brown, McNicol, Duncan and Wisdom provided the proof that there were men named for CA40 at 51b.A.10.c.9.7 buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus.

ATTWOOD '736569'  
 PARSONS '624593'  
 POWELL '737084'  
 HOWIE '628188'  
 KILCUP '832135'  
 MILNE, V.C. '427586'  
 TARLTON '129336'  
 SIMMONS '77309'  
 McNICOL 718887  
 WILLERTON '719161'  
 ALLEN '420819'  
 BLAIK '736108'  
 BONIVER '871504'  
 SNELGROVE '624477'  
 HOOPER '736880'  
 DUNCAN 718675  
 PATTISON '718269'  
 PHILLIPS '105741'  
 STRICKLER '625303'  
 LEITCH '736651'  
 KIRBY '718249'  
 DICKSON '160168'  
 HAWKINS '736103'  
 LAYCOCK '70022'  
 McWILLIAMS '718526'  
 BRADSHAW '43945'  
 BETTS '736746'  
 OWEN '859684'  
 WISDOM 16372  
 PURNELL '700967'  
 BAGULEY '718192'  
 CLEMONS '721564'

RUDDOCK '129200'  
ARMITAGE '625286'  
BALL '700410'  
PIPER '736967'  
HAMILTON 'A/20408'  
MANNING '718699'

The plan was to include all that information in the final version of the second report, which was drafted on July 11th:

#### DRAFT REPORT FOR COMMENT:

On March 1, 2016 a Research Team at the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group submitted the Interim Report dealing with the location of the Canadian 1st Division Burial Ground known as "CA40".

The CWGC reference to the burial ground is contained in the documentation for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus:

*GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.*

~~Note that the recorded number of 44 men, reported at the time the cemetery was created, was subsequently reduced to 40 when 4 bodies were recovered in 1920 and concentrated into the Lieven Communal Cemetery Extension.~~ We have now correctly identified the names of the 44 men registered with an initial burial site at CA40 (51b.A.10.c.9.7), four (4) of whom are confirmed buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus. An additional four (4) men were recovered from those trench map coordinates in 1920 and concentrated into the Lieven Communal Cemetery Extension. Those men did not have a burial reference to the name "CA40" (see COG-BR 2020936).

In the second phase of the research program, which has taken an additional 16 months, we have conducted a through examination of the burial records for all the men suspected of being buried at CA40, plus the records for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Two additional site visits were also completed, the first in April 2016 and the a second in April 2017. The site inspectors also walked the path of the 16th Battalion for April 9, 1917, based on the details provided in the period war diaries. Based on the results to date, we are pleased to report on our findings: *(note, I changed this from what initially said "conclusions")*

1. There remain a number of possible locations for the initial battlefield burial site, known as CA40, however the importance of locating the site is now a moot point. The evidence is clear that the men were exhumed from that site, if they were buried there, and were concentrated into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. This is in agreement with the period reports from the CWGC.
2. The recreation of the Nine Elms database (Excel Spreadsheet - **Attachment #1**), to which we added back all the UNKNOWNS, provided a list of 682 Commonwealth grave sites or memorials. We added to this database all the trench map coordinates for the Canadian burials that were the result of concentrations. A comparison of the initial burial location of the 97 Unknown Canadians provided clear evidence that there was a minimum of 40 graves in the cemetery that could contain the remains of a 16th Battalion soldier. Statements by other researchers that the graves located in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery were checked and the men of the 16th Battalion were not there *(note - I will get the exact quote)* did not account for the fact that they were not identified at the time of the concentrations, thus there was no way to identify them by battalion, let alone by name.
3. An examination of the burial records of all of the men of the 16th Battalion that were identified during the concentration of the graves into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery revealed that some were reported to have been buried in a battlefield cemetery identified as "CA40" and at a location identified as **36c.A.10.c.9.7** *(note that we know this was an error and the coordinates should have*



been **51b.A.10.c.9.7**). A copy of the E-13 grave registrations revealed the following: (**Attachment #2**)

- Sergeant Colin Matson Wisdom #16372 was not buried at **CA40**, rather at **CA39** located at **51b.A.11.c.3.0**. The grave was subsequently destroyed in later battles and he is remembered by "Arras Road Cemetery Memorial 1 - Headstone 5".
- Private Walter McNicol #718887 was not buried at **CA40**, rather at **CA6** located at **51b.A.11.d.2.3**. He is buried in Plot 1 Row D Grave 3 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
- Private Firth Duncan #718675 whose grave registrations refers to CA40 at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** was exhumed from **51b.A.10.d.2.6**. He is buried in Plot 1 Row G Grave 39 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
- Private James Marion Brown #160741 was exhumed from **CB10** located at **51b.A.11.a.7.6**, not from the reported battlefield burial site at **CA40**. He is buried in Plot 4 Row C Grave 1 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

4. **If we add information on the Burial Returns 2247-2287, something like:** An analysis of the BR-Burial Return Records shows that 36 of the 44 men, listed as buried at CA40, share common record references with Brown (2247), McNicol (2248), Duncan (2248) and Wisdom (2249). The remaining 8 men of the 44 are common to BR 2250, however there is not (*at least yet*) to a direct burial in Nine Elms (*the search continues*). *Note: I need to find out if these 4 men are on the surviving 16th Battalion Cross, which may or may not be the same as the GRRF Cross 9. Only Brown is on that list.*

The findings reported above provide compelling evidence that the information reported in the period cemetery register for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus was correct and that the ~~40~~ 44 men were concentrated from various battlefield burial sites into the cemetery, **four (4) of which are identified**. As such, we do not believe that there is a mass grave containing the remains of **the other 40** men of the 16th Battalion. This does not mean that there are not additional remains in the battlefield area, from various Commonwealth units, that have yet to be recovered.

## Retrospect

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jul 18, 2017 7:30 am**

Was a bountiful circle, Richard. Allowed us to draw some important conclusions following recent analysis.

## FundRazr Update 17 July 2017

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jul 20, 2017 12:30 pm**

### **Norm Christie wrote:**

Recently, a supporter of the Help Recover Our Vimy Heroes campaign wrote the following message to the Honourable Kent Hehr, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence:

### **A Canadian Citizen wrote:**

After watching the documentary Searching for Vimy's Lost Soldiers, it is intolerable and a national shame that the Canadian government has allowed this situation to arise, and forced private citizens to personally cough up money and time to locate these valiant Canadian men, who died for this country. It is especially egregious given that a significant contributing factor for this matter is a clerical error in the documentation at the time. We absolutely owe it to the families, and to all service people, to rectify this regrettable oversight.

I implore you to immediately launch an investigation and pursue an appropriate resolution, as well as to pursue diplomatic channels in France of the highest order to enable the search for these heroic patriots to resume, and to ultimately bring this matter to its only

acceptable conclusion, to enable the recognition these men deserve and, most importantly, earned.

***Minister Hehr in reply wrote:***

Thank you for your e-mail regarding Mr. Norm Christie's initiative to locate and reinter the remains of 44 Canadian soldiers who died in the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Our nation's men and women in uniform have made tremendous sacrifices to defend the freedom that we and others around the world enjoy today, and Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to preserving their legacy.

The Department does not stand alone in this important mission and always welcomes private initiatives that help to keep the torch of remembrance burning bright. However, Veterans Affairs Canada is not responsible for the recovery, identification and reinterment of the remains of those who went missing in action during military operations. Therefore, the Department does not have a funding mechanism in place to support Mr. Christie's project.

That being said, when Canadian war dead are discovered, the Department of National Defence, through its Casualty Identification Program, collaborates with local authorities and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to recover and identify the remains. More details about this program are available at DHH - Historic Casualty Identification.

...

Again, thank you for writing and for your interest in ensuring that Canada's fallen heroes are appropriately commemorated. I hope that the information provided is helpful.

---

## Lambis Englezos and the Press

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jul 20, 2017 12:54 pm**

I had my suspicions that our own well known historian may have used Lambis Englezos' experience as a template.

***Norm Christie wrote:***

Recent work by the Australians have resulted in the recovery of 150 Australian remains, and Norm feels if the Australians can do it there is no reason why Canadians can't also show that level of determination and pride.

That must be a typo - exactly 250 bodies were found.

Did Lambis court the press and seek political assistance?

From an interview with Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in 2010....

***Peter Thompson (ABC) wrote:***

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is established throughout the world wherever Commonwealth soldiers fell. They themselves, you would have thought, would have done a very thorough investigation.

***Lambis Englezos wrote:***

Post-war, there was a group who did go around France and Belgium, trying to find burial sites. We were told that it was highly unlikely that a site that big could have been missed, that the work of the Grave Registration Unit was very thorough. The numbers are, you know, they're all accounted for. There was a range of responses. However, we persisted. **We eventually had to go to the press and apply some political pressure as well.** And it's been many years of advocacy, but we now have a wonderful result.

**Lambis Englezos wrote:**

I firmly believe that we've got a moral obligation, if you can find your war dead, you should recover them.

**Peter Thompson wrote:**

So there will be more finds?

**Lambis Englezos wrote:**

We have likely sites.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Thu Jul 20, 2017 3:37 pm**

I don't believe the government needs to fund or be involved in the search for missing soldiers, especially 100 years after the battle. Norm Christie has fanned the flames of patriotism and emotionalism to help fund his project. He has been offered private money to fund his project but chose to raise funds through Fundrazr to maintain control over the intellectual property.

I like the fact we can privately research "missing" soldiers from WW1 without the watchful eye of the government. The thrill is the chase. We know that the government will provide support once clear evidence is gathered.

I know other will disagree and that is great.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Jul 20, 2017 4:15 pm**

The unfortunate part of all of this is that someone believed what is in the video (or videos) without the advantage of access to the correct (or if you wish alternative - CWGC stated) evidence. That has been my primary concern with this from the start, as it was only through the research on Private Baguley that we opted NOT TO INVEST in the project.

I would have no problem with the Christie research if he would only (a) cooperated and (b) admit there are alternatives. He was dead wrong with Kipling and he is making the same mistake again. It really is intolerable.

We of the alternative faith here, and granted not all of that "there are alternatives" faith, we have never said that Christie is wrong or that the men are not there. What we have always said is that there are alternatives and the Christie argument is weak on facts, lack of published (shared) research.

I imagine that after Christie urged the families to sue the PMO that word was sent down the ranks - do not cooperate in any manner.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Jul 20, 2017 9:58 pm**

I wish Mr. Christie all the success he might be able to garner. I think he has done real service to Canada through his investigative journalism and expository approach that has kept the sacrifice of Canadian veterans "front and center" in an era of fading awareness and appreciation. I enjoy seeing what he is able to produce.

All of his funding should be through private donations for any effort concerning CA.40.

I, personally, find his rhetoric, concerning CA.40, to be needlessly inflammatory and I have been forced to consider his position to be questionable. I would be surprised if he can receive any support from the CWGC. By extension, from that lack of support, I think support from any Canadian governmental agency will, therefore, be difficult to secure.

Urging lawsuits against the Canadian government, for Mr. Christie's position, is an avenue that leaves one hanging.

I have seen some evidence that the French government is anxious to be of service if there are Canadian soldiers on French soil that have not been recovered and have yet to receive a decent burial. French interests in this would like to see Canadian support for this endeavour, if I understand what I have seen correctly.

I have been forced to consider some likelihood that the soldiers associated with the notion of CA.40 were exhumed and relocated to Nine Elms Military Cemetery.

I will be happy to be proven wrong, by Mr. Christie's effort, if these Canadian soldiers have been callously ignored for any reason. I had thought Mr. Christie's "dig" was to be confined to his assurances of where CA.40 was located. That level of assurance seems, now, to be on a sliding scale.

Perhaps digging around in other locations will turn something up?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sun Jul 23, 2017 10:41 pm**

### ***vimyboy wrote:***

I don't believe the government needs to fund or be involved in the search for missing soldiers, especially 100 years after the battle. Norm Christie has fanned the flames of patriotism and emotionalism to help fund his project. He has been offered private money to fund his project but chose to raise funds through Fundrazr to maintain control over the intellectual property.

I like the fact we can privately research "missing" soldiers from WW1 without the watchful eye of the government. The thrill is the chase. We know that the government will provide support once clear evidence is gathered.

I know other will disagree and that is great.

And I would have to disagree there: finding the missing, identifying them and given them a proper burial and marker is a moral responsibility of the Canadian people, and therefore of their government that will never expire.

I applaud Norm Christie's long efforts to "fan the flames of patriotism" in this country where so many seem, and others in fact are, determined to undermine our national identity and our cultural self-respect. Some in the service of globalist hogwash, others from a peurile, perverse and knee-jerk



political agenda.

It pains me to see Mr. Christie digging himself in deeper and deeper on this story and frankly I hope he will drop it.

The research done here pretty much proves there is no mass grave to be found IMHO.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Mon Jul 24, 2017 10:52 am**

Hi Rob;

Thanks for the comment. You make a great distinction between the "moral" requirement of Canadians to find the bodies and the "legal" requirement. NC is making a non-existent plea to sue the government under a law that does not exist. There is no current law that covers WW1 soldiers and their recovery.

Of course there is a moral responsibility to recover our soldiers. That will never expire. I stand by my comments that I do not expect the Government to actively fund any effort to find lost soldiers from WW1. I do expect them to fund any effort to recovery bodies that have been found though.

Have a good day.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Mon Jul 24, 2017 11:42 am**

*vimyboy wrote:*

Of course there is a moral responsibility to recover our soldiers. That will never expire. I stand by my comments that I do not expect the Government to actively fund any effort to find lost soldiers from WW1. I do expect them to fund any effort to recovery bodies that have been found though.

I am in agreement with this.

After all, where does it end? Do I petition my MP and the Minister to fund efforts to locate the gravesite of a Ladner boy who died in South Africa? How about our airmen who died over France and Germany in the Second War? Should we essentially dig up Europe and the rest of the globe looking for DNA?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Mon Jul 24, 2017 12:06 pm**

It shouldn't need to be said, and it probably doesn't, that where there is reasonable evidence that remains may exist there is a responsibility to investigate thoroughly. No one is proposing "dig up Europe and the rest of the globe", just that we use our common sense and weigh the evidence in a thorough and impartial manner.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**

Posted: **Mon Jul 24, 2017 12:30 pm**

But who decides what is reasonable evidence? A team of amateur historians? A team of Federal government employees? A kook with a bee in his bonnet?

And everybody has their own version of common sense . . .

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 12:10 am**

Whoever takes the trouble to assemble the evidence and present it to the appropriate authorities, of course.

The "amateur historians" seem to have bested the "professional" in this case.

Not the first time, nor the last.

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All times are UTC-04:00  
Page **26** of **30**

# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 27 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 6:39 am**

Crossed my mind this morning that we should conclude our report to the CWGC with something like the following:

We would suggest that based on the initial findings (cemetery register report) of the IWGC/CWGC, coupled with our substantiating research, that a "Special Memorial B" be placed in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, listing the names of the 40 men of the 16th Battalion that are believed to be buried in the cemetery but their actual graves are unknown.

I have Tim's edits on the draft but I have not had time to get back to the details - hay season and rain have made this a terrible week!

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 7:21 am**

Richard,

My recent efforts have been a bit casual, too...family visits, summertime intrudes.

I think the "Special Memorial B" suggestion is a good one.

---

### 113th Battalion Lethbridge Highlanders

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 12:24 pm**

I find it rather odd we have had no mention of the 113th Battalion Lethbridge Highlanders in this thread.

This Herald News article is from over a year ago...

*Some unnamed journalist at the Herald News wrote:*  
Christie says the dead — including **10 members of the 113th Battalion Lethbridge Highlanders** — were supposed to be exhumed and relocated to a nearby cemetery called Nine Elms, but it never happened.

Interestingly, when you look at Wikipedia topic 113th Battalion (Lethbridge Highlanders), CEF, our topic ID 39 is the first citation! Way to go CEFSG!

The article reveals these men were replacements for the 16th Battalion.

Has anyone determined the identities of the 10 men in question?

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 3:04 pm**

If I have collected the comments and changes correctly this would be the 2nd version of the report. As always, your questions, comments and concerns are not only appreciated but expected.

Now moved to Revision 3 that follows.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Tue Jul 25, 2017 10:19 pm**

Richard,

I sent you a little "look see" set of suggestions for revision.

A LOT of good work has gotten us here. I do hope we are not in error (I sense the sword of Damocles above) and I must say I am not happy to be in opposition to Mr. Christie.

Perhaps he will surprise us through subsequent endeavour.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Jul 26, 2017 8:16 pm**

I have taken the suggested edits from all members and inserted them into this text. Please verify that your suggestions were made correctly. I will send the report to Dominique Boulais with a copy to David Avery and Nic Andrews. Others can send a copy of the report to any other party they wish.

### REVISED (3) REPORT FOR COMMENT: (26 July 2017 - updated 27 July 2016)

On March 1, 2016 a research team composed of members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group submitted an Interim Report concerned with the location of the Canadian 1st Division Burial Ground known as "CA40".

The CWGC reference to the burial ground is contained in the documentation for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thelus:

*The rest of the cemetery was made after the Armistice by the concentration of British and French graves from the battlefields of Vimy and Neuville-St. Vaast and from certain small cemeteries, including: - GRAVE CA 40, THELUS, 274 metres West of the main road, by the light railway track. Here were buried 44 Canadian soldiers of the 16th Battalion who fell on the 9th April 1917.*

We have now correctly identified the names of the 44 men registered with an initial burial site at CA40 (51b.A.10.c.9.7), four (4) of whom are confirmed buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thélus. An additional four (4) men were recovered from those trench map coordinates in 1920 and concentrated into the Lieven Communal Cemetery Extension. Those men did not have a burial reference to the name "CA40" (see COG-BR 2020936).

In the second phase of the research program, which has taken an additional 16 months, we have conducted a thorough examination of the burial records for all the men whose exhumations were attributed to battlefield burial at CA40, plus the later, concentration and reburial, records for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. Two additional site visits were also completed, the first in April 2016 and the second in April 2017. The site inspectors also walked the path of the 16th Battalion for April 9, 1917, using the details provided in the period war diaries. Based on the results to date, we are pleased to report on our findings:

1. There remain a number of possible locations for the initial battlefield burial site, known as CA40, however the importance of locating the site is now a moot point. The evidence is clear that the



men were exhumed from that site, if they were buried there, and were concentrated into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery. This is in agreement with the period reports from the CWGC.

2. The recreation of the Nine Elms database (Excel Spreadsheet - **Attachment #1**), to which we added back all the UNKNOWNs, provided a list of 682 Commonwealth grave sites or memorials. We added to this database all the trench map coordinates for the Canadian burials that were the result of concentrations. A comparison of the initial burial location of the 97 Unknown Canadians provided clear evidence that there was a minimum of 40 graves in the cemetery that could contain the remains of a 16th Battalion soldier. Other researchers stated that the graves located in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery were checked and the men of the 16th Battalion were not there. In our opinion, that research did not account for the fact that they were not identified at the time of the concentrations, thus there was no way to identify them by battalion, let alone by name. The statement is therefore redundant.
3. An examination of the burial records of all of the men of the 16th Battalion that were identified during the concentration of the graves into the Nine Elms Military Cemetery revealed that some were reported to have been buried in a battlefield cemetery identified as "CA40" and at a location identified as **36c.A.10.c.9.7** (*note that we know this was an error and the coordinates should have been 51b.A.10.c.9.7*). A copy of the E-13 grave registrations revealed the following: (**Attachment #2**)
  - Sergeant Colin Matson Wisdom #16372 was not buried at **CA40**, rather at **CA39** located at **51b.A.11.c.3.0**. The grave was subsequently destroyed in later battles and he is remembered by "Arras Road Cemetery Memorial 1 - Headstone 5".
  - Private Walter McNicol #718887 was not buried at **CA40**, rather at **CA6** located at **51b.A.11.d.2.3**. He is buried in Plot 1 Row D Grave 3 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
  - Private Firth Duncan #718675 whose grave registrations refers to CA40 at **51b.A.10.c.9.7** was exhumed from **51b.A.10.d.2.6**. He is buried in Plot 1 Row G Grave 39 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
  - Private James Marion Brown #160741 was exhumed from **CB10** located at **51b.A.11.a.7.6**, not from the reported battlefield burial site at **CA40**. He is buried in Plot 4 Row C Grave 1 at the Nine Elms Military Cemetery.
4. An analysis of the BR-Burial Return Records shows that 36 of the 44 men, listed as buried at CA40, share common record references with Brown (BR 2247), McNicol (BR 2248), Duncan (BR 2248) and Wisdom (BR 2249). The remaining 8 men of the 44 are common to BR 2250. Future research on all the men in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery may provide additional linkage to the (BR) Burial Returns.

The findings reported above provide compelling evidence that the information reported in the period cemetery register for the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, Thélus was correct and that the 44 men were concentrated from various battlefield burial sites into the cemetery, four (4) of which are identified. Therefore, we do not believe that there is a mass grave containing the remains of the other 40 men of the 16th Battalion. This does not mean that there are not additional remains in the battlefield area, from various Commonwealth units, that have yet to be recovered.

We would suggest that based on the initial findings (cemetery register report) of the IWGC/CWGC, coupled with our substantiating research, that a "**Special Memorial B**" be placed in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery; listing the names of the 40 men of the 16th Battalion that are believed to be buried in the cemetery but, whereas, their actual graves are unknown.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Wed Jul 26, 2017 10:43 pm**

I just sent my last suggestions for review.

I never thought I would be in on this ride. I thank everyone for their time, consideration and devotion.

PS: I'm not altogether sure we're done with CA.40, yet.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Broznitsky**Posted: **Thu Jul 27, 2017 8:36 am**

It would have been nice if ALL research about CA40 was shared, rather than a small restricted group keeping it all private and secret squirrel need-to-know. What is the purpose of that? To make some money from a documentary?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **ejwalshe**Posted: **Thu Jul 27, 2017 10:00 am**

*Broznitsky wrote:*

To make some money from a documentary?

There are some in that *not so small* restricted group who do need to make money, as it is their raison d'être (me thinking Breakthrough Entertainment Inc.).

I'll never believe Mr. Christie is among them though - he cares much more for the Canadian families involved than making a few bucks, IMHO.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Thu Jul 27, 2017 3:28 pm**

Report #2 is now "live" on the CEFSG web site. It is NOT in the Table of Contents for the site or in the drop down menu. You would find it from a Google search (once it was logged) or if someone gave you the link.

CA40: Report #2 Submitted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

This incorporates all the changes, up to and including the last edit from Tim at 3 pm today.

I have considered, but not added yet, an additional sentence that notes that the names of our 44 men differ from those of other researchers. Most certainly that is important but I don't want to detract from the main message.

This process follows the protocol we have with the CWGC from the "Unknown Reports", that being that they are posted to the web site and the CWGC can download them as they wish. It also makes it easy to make minor corrections, or add additional information, at which time we notify the CWGC of the change. It also makes it easy for members to forward the link to whomever they choose, at which time the recipient gets the most up-to-date version.

The only people I intend sending the link to is Dominique Boulais, David Avery and Nic Andrews (all CWGC). That is the same group that asked for our understanding of the other investigation(s).

To finalize this, I will make condensed versions of the two (2) attachments and add them to the CEFSG web site so they are direct downloads. I will see if I can make images that provide the key information that can be attached to the report.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**Posted: **Fri Jul 28, 2017 6:08 am**

I was working on the ATTACHMENTS when something appeared. There was always the question of the men on this COG-BR and whether there were supposed to be "ditto" marks to show they were all 15th Battalion from CA39 or was it possible they were also 16th Battalion.

I checked the **Vimy Memorial** for the 15th Battalion for April 9th to 12th and there are only **11 records**, 10 of which were for the 9th and the last for the 10th.

There are 21 spaces on this COG-BR so they are either not 15th Battalion or they are some of the 15th Battalion men also memorialized at the front of the cemetery. Remember we know that Sergeant Wisdom of the 16th Battalion was buried at CA39, not at CA40 as it says on his E-13.

If they are 15th Battalion men, then their graves at CA39 were not destroyed.

I have amended the spreadsheet to add these 21 additional burial locations to the "possible 16th" list, in agreement with Ted's findings. That brings the total grave sites in Nine Elms that are possibly 16th Battalion men to 59.

Comments?

Ref, Map 51B 1/400000

## CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.

EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS.

### Burial Return.

Shett 30.  
29/5/19.

Name of Cemetery of Re-Burial.....NINE ELMS.....THELUS

Plot.	Row.	Grave.	Approximate Map reference where body found.	War cross found on grave.	Particulars on cross found on grave.	Were any effects forwarded to Base.
4	B	1	A 11 c 3.0.	NO	NIL	NO
4	B	2		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	3		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	4		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	5		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	6		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	7		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	8		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	9		YES	Pte. J.Wearer. 800117. 15th. Canadians.	NO
4	B	10		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	11		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	12		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	13		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	14		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	15		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	16		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	17		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	18		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	19		NO	NIL	NO
4	B	20		NO	NIL	NO
4	D	1		XX YES	192145 L/C R.Park. 15th. Bn. Canadians.	NO
4	D	2		NO	NIL	NO
4	D	3		YES	77632 Pte. J.H.Bradley.	NO
4	D	4		NO	NIL	NO

First Army Press, A.P. &

This form to be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Fri Jul 28, 2017 7:33 am**

I had a look at F.H. Bradley, #77632 and he checks out as being with the 15th and KIA on April 9, 1917.

So, 24 exhumations and 21 "Unknowns" from the location known as CA.39...3 crosses still there identify 3 men as members of the 15th.

Looks like this is recorded on May 29, 1919.

## Thélus April & August 1917

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jul 28, 2017 9:55 am**



Cl. British official photo.

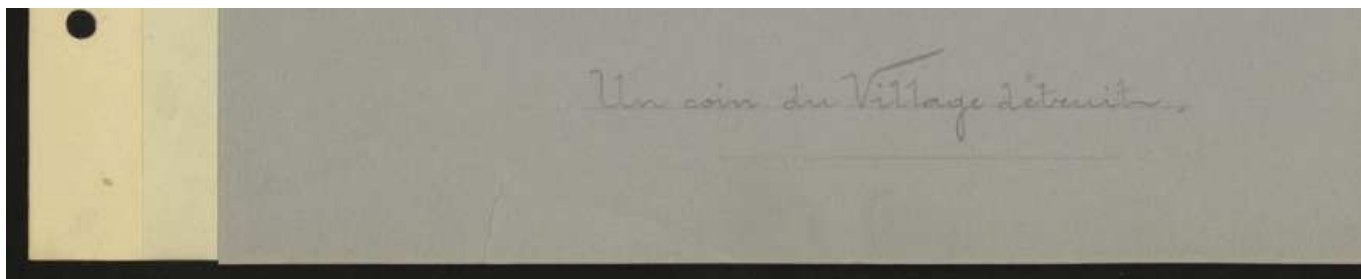
Ct. 4047



Lignes britanniques. Au fond, éclatement d'obus.

Lso. 565





## UCS among 3rd C.I.B.

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jul 28, 2017 10:06 am**

Recent analysis led me to conclude these UCS were mostly 16th Bn as there just were not enough 15th Bn on Vimy Memorial as you noticed, Richard.

We just can't attribute 9 men of the 15th Bn to these UCS as there would be ZERO 15th Bn on Vimy Memorial.

Same is true for the 14th Bn - we can't assign more than one or two of these UCS as 14th - there would not be enough 14th on Vimy Memorial.

Statistically, it would not make sense, and is just too improbable.

I also presumed that the number of missing who should be on the Vimy Memorial among the 3rd C.I.B. should have similar numbers, with the exception of the 13th Bn as they did not see the same action as they were in reserve.

I was willing to cede one or two of these UCS as 15th Bn, but no more, I had previously wrote.

Unit	KIA	MIA	TTL
16th Bn	16	58	74
14th Bn	74	10	84
15th Bn	75	9	84

The MIA of the 16th Bn should be a much lower number, right?

Something similar to the 14th or 15th - a dozen or so.

Unit	KIA	MIA	TTL
16th Bn	56	18	74
14th Bn	74	10	84
15th Bn	75	9	84

Now the numbers for 16th are much more in line with those of 14th & 15th, but perhaps a tad high for MIA, and a tad low for KIA.

The discrepancy does not bother me so much because there is an excess of good locations for other UCS of the 16th Bn.

But, I did not need to concern myself with accounting for the 16th in excess of the 40 missing locations we had sought.

## Discovery of the Old Mill

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Jul 28, 2017 12:20 pm**

My fault I believe for somehow having had the impression NC was responsible for uncovering the Old Mill back in early 2016.

The dig was undertaken by L'Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives (Inrap).

Here is the original posting at [www.20minutes.fr](http://www.20minutes.fr)







I had no idea until today that the remains of 26 soldiers, French and German, had been found, as well as machine gun shelters and parts of the trench network.

? Would be nice to know when and where these soldiers were buried.

Local historians find this place so interesting because French & German soldiers had fraternized in this location on 10 December 1915.



# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 28 of 30

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Jul 29, 2017 5:01 pm**

As I have time (dominated by hay season) I am finishing the attachments for the report. Attachment #1 and #3 are complete and I hope to get #2 done shortly.

At the end I will put an alphabetical list of the CEFSG researchers and members who wish to have their name acknowledged as part of this second report.

Please respond as to:

- I want my name added to the list.
- Please do not add me to the list.

I will word it such that the report is not from EVERY MEMBER of the CEFSG but from the CA40 RESEARCH GROUP as we know that not everyone is in agreement with these findings.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sun Jul 30, 2017 6:41 am**

The attachments have now been added and are hyperlinked from within the document:

CA40 Report #2 for Submission to the CWGC

I have added Pte. Dingwall to the report as well. You may recall he was 13th MGC that was reported buried at CA40 and then later at CA39.

At the bottom of the on-line report there is a NOTE that you can obtain PDF versions of the two (2) CA40 Reports submitted to the CWGC at these links (for viewing or download):

CA40 Report #1

CA40 Report #2

See my post above about adding the names to the report. I will send an e-mail to the CWGC Monday Morning to let them know that the report has been released, so please send any final questions, comments or corrections.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Sun Jul 30, 2017 7:08 am**

I'm in, Richard.

Thanks for all your work, Tim.

---

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Wed Aug 02, 2017 3:23 pm**

From: Dominique Boulais  
Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2017 12:48 PM  
To: IVAN.DELLAIRE@forces.gc.ca  
Cc: Nic Andrews; David Avery; David Kettle; Richard Laughton CEFSG  
Subject: FW: CA40: Report #2 Submitted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Bonjour Ivan,

You may be interested by the email below from Richard Laughton of the CEFSG.

Dominique

[http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp ... ex-eng.asp](http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp...ex-eng.asp)

### Organizational Structure

Director: Dr. Steve Harris  
Coordinator: LCol Durwin McLellan  
DHH 2 - CF Chief Historian: Dr. Steve Harris  
DHH 3 - CF Dress and Ceremonial: Major Stephen Miller  
DHH 5 - CF Museums and Historical Collections: Mr. Michel Litalien  
DHH 6 - CF Heritage Officer: Major Ivan Dellaire  
DHH 7 - Supervisor of Music: LCol Peter Chan

Canada's legal and moral obligation to care for newly-discovered remains of servicemen and women from 20th century wars gave rise in 2007 to a dedicated DND identification program. The role of the Casualty Identification program is to recover (when necessary) then, whenever possible, identify through historic and scientific analytical techniques and bury these remains. The military burial connects serving members with their fallen comrades and the families of the fallen, fostering a strong sense of continuity and identity with past generations who have served Canada.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Thu Sep 21, 2017 12:19 am**

Some rather poor photos I took with my phone at the CWM recently. (They will enlarge when clicked on) I thought the damage to the 13th Battalion Cross at Nine Elms was interesting and the photo of the graves below the Ridge from "the Metcalfe Collection." Unfortunately I could not capture the names on the cross with my phone. The similarity to the 16th Battalion cross is obvious.



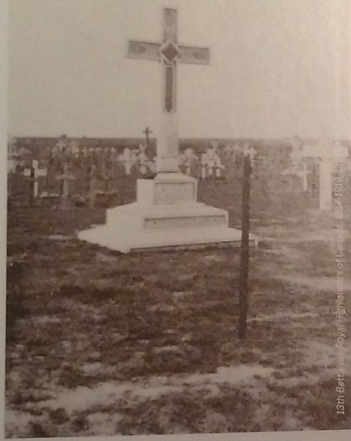
## Loss

**This rare photograph, likely from early 1919, shows temporary Canadian graves below the ridge. Of the nearly 10,600 Canadians casualties at Vimy, 3,598 Canadians were killed and are buried in the area.**

## Les pertes

**Cette photo rare, probablement réalisée au début de 1919, montre des tombes canadiennes temporaires sous la crête. On dénombre près de 10 600 pertes canadiennes à Vimy, dont 3,598 mortalités. Pour la plupart, leur dépouille demeure enterrée dans la région.**

## The Memorial

**ORIGINAL LOCATION**

This photograph shows the cross erected by the 13th Canadian Battalion at Nine Elms Military Cemetery in Thélus, France, during the war.

**L'EMPLACEMENT D'ORIGINE**

Cette photographie montre la croix érigée par le 13e bataillon canadien au cimetière militaire de Nine Elms à Thélus, en France, durant la guerre.

**SURVIVORS REMEMBER**

In July 1917, members of the 13th Canadian Battalion erected this cross at Nine Elms Military Cemetery in Thélus, France, for those who died during the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

**LES SURVIVANTS SE SOUVIENNENT**

En juillet 1917, des membres du 13e bataillon canadien ont érigé cette croix au cimetière militaire de Nine Elms à Thélus, en France, pour rendre hommage à ceux qui sont morts pendant la bataille de la crête de Vimy.

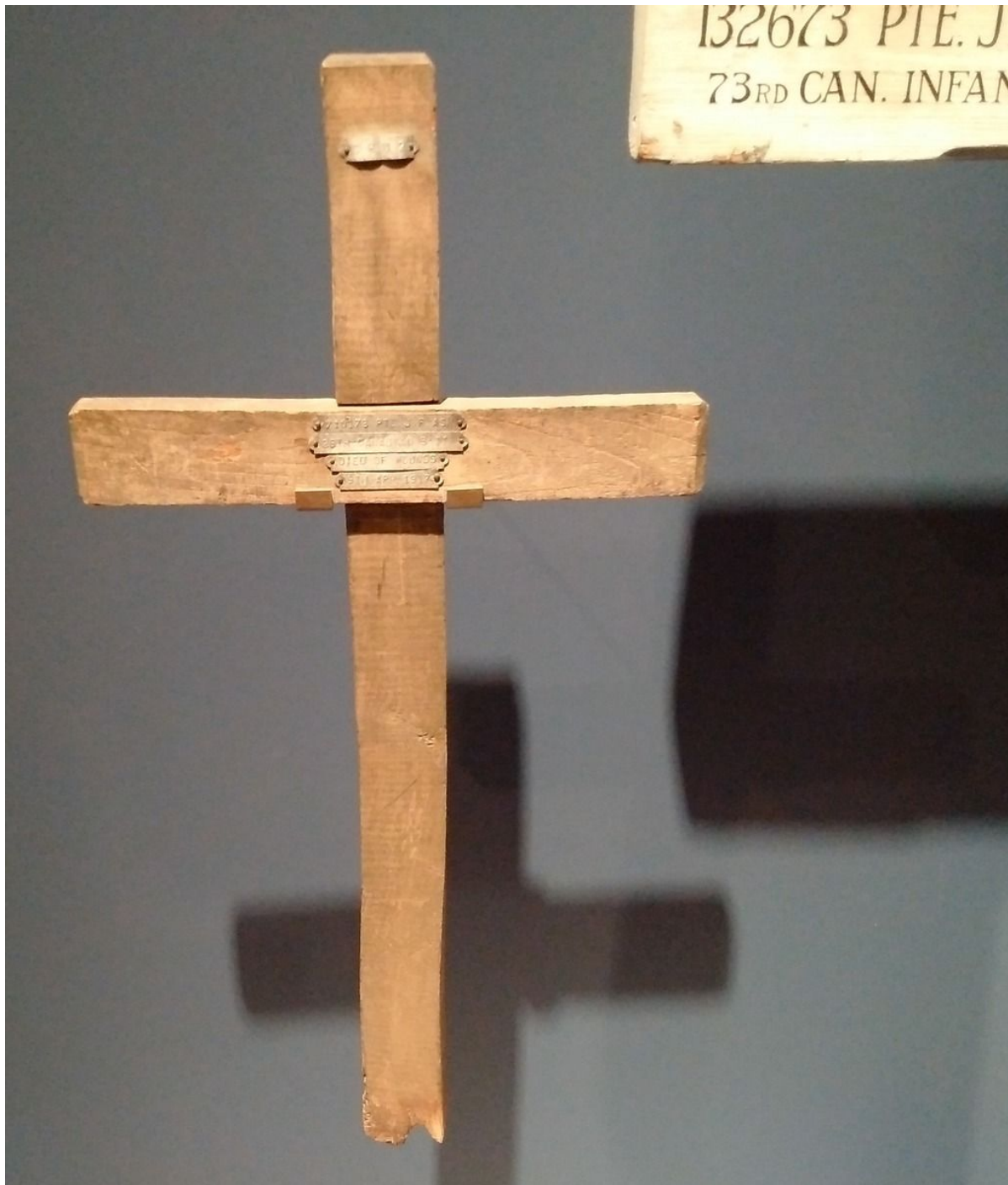
**Grave Marker**

Canadian War Museum 19880001-631

**Stèle funéraire**

Musée canadien de la guerre 19880001-631







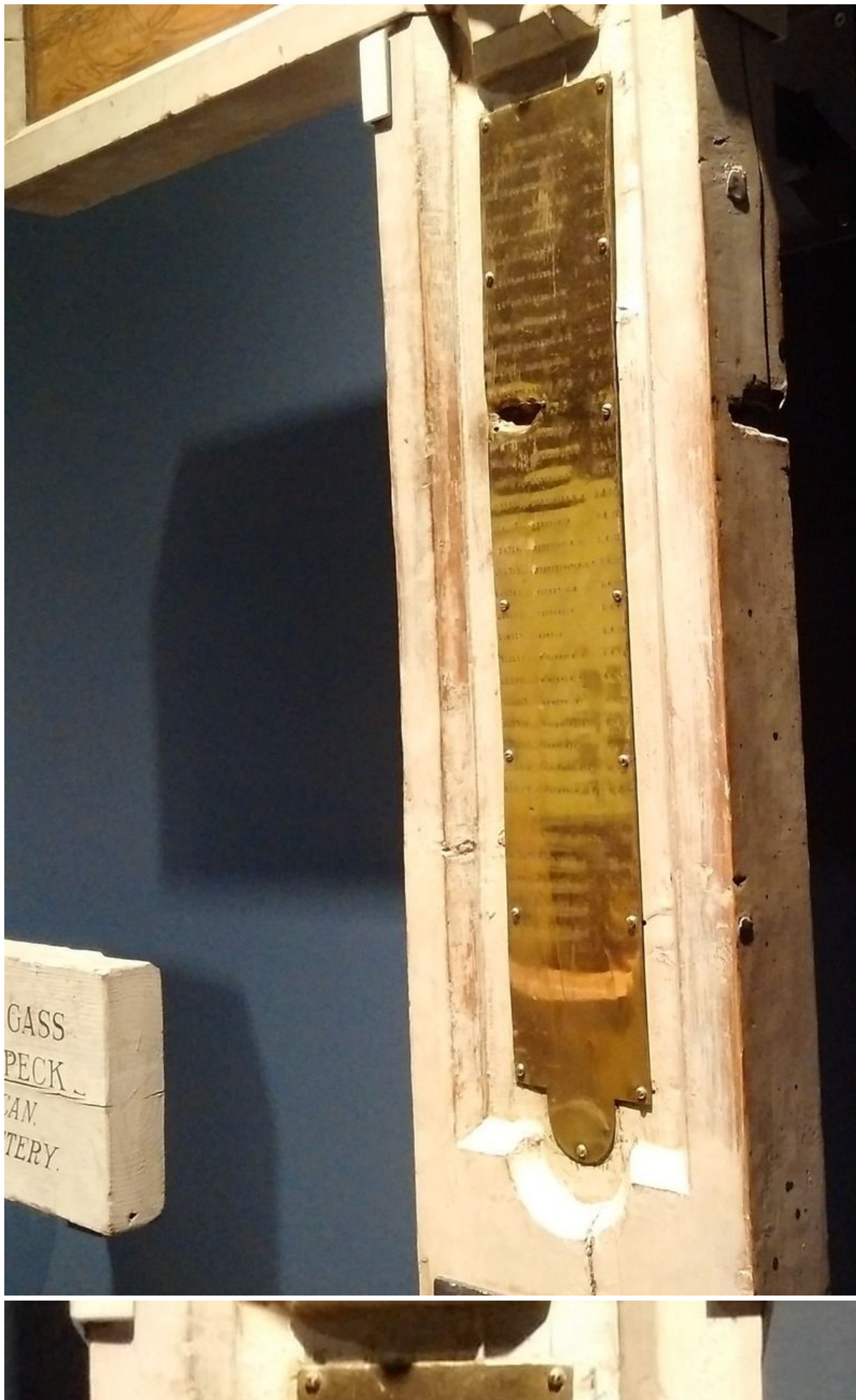
### **Memorial Service at Vimy**

The 87th Battalion held this service in September 1917 in memory of its members who were killed in the Battle of Vimy Ridge.















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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **Canach**

Posted: **Thu Nov 23, 2017 10:40 am**

Off topic but ...two skeletons found near Vimy Memorial this past Wednesday. Probably French and German.

[http://www.lavoixdunord.fr/271231/artic ... al-de-vimy#](http://www.lavoixdunord.fr/271231/artic...al-de-vimy#)

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **canadawwi**

Posted: **Fri Dec 01, 2017 12:23 pm**

We've discussed in this thread the procedures, steps and costs involved in a battlefield excavation. Currently I've noticed a lot of promotion on Twitter regarding a crowd funding project called "Dig Hill 80". Their fundraising site outlines some of the costs and their plans. I thought this might be interesting to read, considering that Norm Christie also had an online fund raiser tied to his project.

Link:

Dig Hill 80: Excavating an Endangered WW1 Battlefield

More details and daily updates on Twitter at @DigHill80

2 minute video

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Dec 02, 2017 8:49 pm**

They have done a very professional job with their project - lots of support from local groups, museums, TV and celebrities. They have done their research and have a very solid plan. I have signed up to participate in their dig next year as part of their fund raising effort. This project is not a vanity project and it is run by professionals with a goal to excavate and understand a German strong hold from WW1. Refreshing,

---

## VAC Reply

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Jan 11, 2018 10:59 am**

Nine months later, I have received a reply from the minister at VAC.

To his credit, he did not have to reply to me as my original letter was not sent on his watch, and the former minister 🤔🇨🇦🤔 at VAC had plenty of time to respond, but never instructed his staff to "Please prepare a response. - K"

I cannot explain how he came to believe my letter was forwarded to him by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as my original letter was directed only to my MP, and the minister at VAC.

I would assume the letter was forwarded to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by the former Minister of Veterans Affairs - this is an important point, because I discussed this issue with my own MP, and specifically asked that the Minister of Foreign Affairs not be involved. It was suggested to me by my own MP that my letter be sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, after I had received information from the French Ambassador that NC's dig was stopped because he had purposely not completed necessary permits/applications for his multiple digs.

-----

Back to the response from the Minister of Veterans Affairs...

The standard reply that his office will not get involved because VAC does not participate in recovery, and that this is a private venture, **was to be expected**.

**What was not expected?** It really ticked me off S.O. wrote to me as if I had never heard of the Vimy Memorial, nor knew about various resources offered by our government, such as the records available at LAC.

I should write back to say thanks, but no thanks.

Also felt like sending him a copy of our report just to show how much he underestimated me...

Checked my ego at the door instead.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **geluveld**

Posted: **Fri Feb 02, 2018 4:49 pm**

Due to specific searching on a name, I came onto this lengthy topic.  
Went through it during the day and evening and found it most interesting.

I am in the possession of the ground dug ID tag of Pte Joseph Marks Strickler, mentioned here several times as being one of the researched soldiers of the 16th Bn.

The tag was recuperated many years ago in Maison Blanche tunnel.

At first I believed that the 16th sheltered there before the 9th April battle (and led me to believe he lost his tag on there).

However, I know read in one of the posts made here that the 16th were put on rest there on the 10-11 April, thus after the battle.

Could it then instead be possible that the tag was collected from the body of Pte Strickler and taken with an officer to the tunnel, and then left/lost there after registration that this private was killed in action?

---

## Pte Joseph Marks Strickler

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Fri Feb 02, 2018 4:57 pm**

You were indeed correct - the 16th came out of Maison Blanche and into the forward trenches between 02h00 and 05h00 on April 9th, 1917.

Keep in mind they had two tags - one of them should have always been attached to the remains.

I am thinking you must have a metal tag? Not many men had these. Most had the hard-cardboard type which disintegrated (see the Hallu Eight case).

However, good thinking...your scenario is entirely plausible.

Good work!

---

## Battle of Vimy Ridge [audio file]

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue Feb 06, 2018 3:58 pm**

Here's an audio file from an unknown member of the 16th Battalion in No. 2 or No. 4 Company.

The beginning of the file reveals these two companies were first over the top.

Imagine...this man is wounded, then escorts six POWs to a dressing station where he realizes his leg is broken.

Battle of Vimy Ridge [audio file]

If you do nothing else today, make sure you find time to listen to this - you will be amazed.

Edit: I believe this is Private Percy Twidale 736694, born 1892.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **vimyboy**

Posted: **Sat Apr 14, 2018 10:55 am**

I have called Norm's effort at the "Crater" a bit of a sham. I am going to be part of an archeological dig at Hill 80 at Wytschaete in May (thanks to their Kickstarter Fund Raising effort). This is a real professional effort and they are spending serious money and 3 months on the site. This is what a "real" dig looks like. Please see the pictures - they start digging next week.

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **2nd CMR**

Posted: **Sat Apr 14, 2018 11:53 am**

That will deserve its own thread with regular updates. 😊

---

## Regular Updates

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Tue May 15, 2018 8:29 am**

Speaking of regular updates, there are no longer any at the FundRazr site for "Help Recover Our Vimy Heroes."

There were two updates in January 2018, followed by the obligatory update on April 9th.

The first four months of 2018 have seen less than \$2,000 donated to the cause.

Whereas, the first four months of 2016 had over \$12,000 collected.

There is nearly \$65,000 in the till (far short of the goal of \$110,000).



However, I would not say the campaign has stalled, because another group mentioned in the updates has collected close to \$50,000 for the same cause, but, oddly, this money has not been mentioned in the total.

In other words, the goal of \$110K had already been reached before the end of 2017.

Moot point.

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<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page 29 of 30

by **cefstudent**

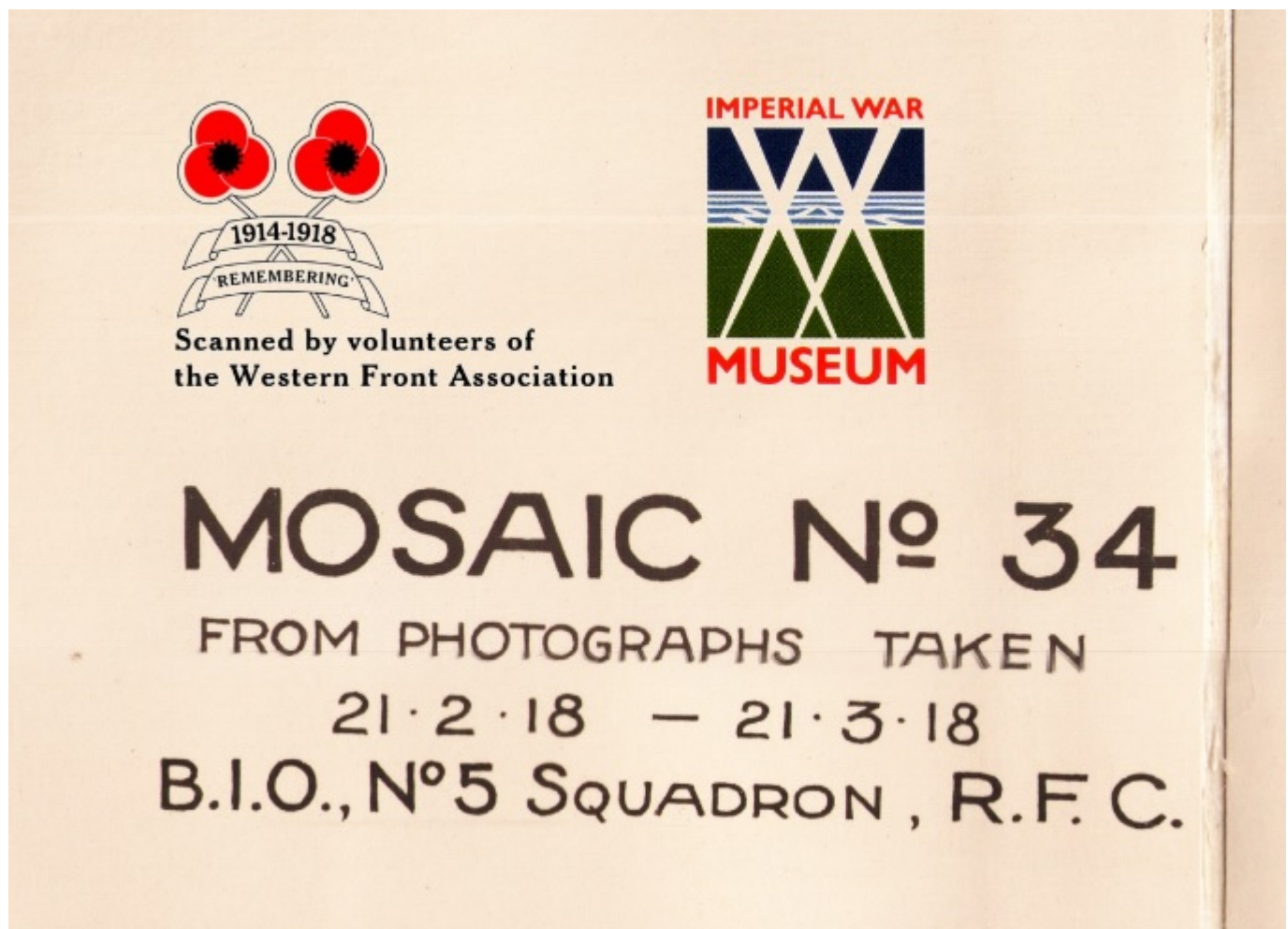
Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 1:14 pm**

Hi Everyone,

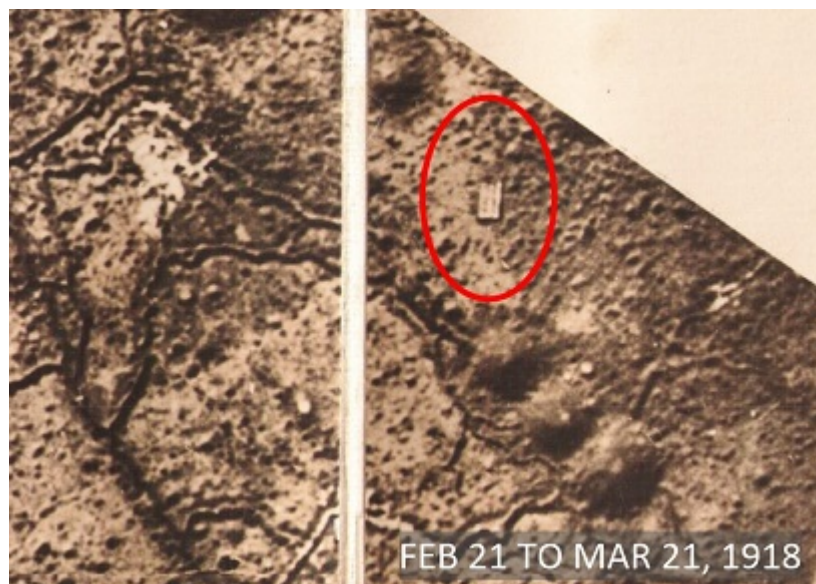
I almost hate to resurrect this topic but I was doing some research and came across something new that I think adds a new light to this project.

The Western Front Association went into the vaults of the Imperial War Museum years ago and digitized a huge number of maps. I had the one covering the CA40 area from another project I worked on so started going through it to see if there was anything interesting - at the time I was looking for changes to trenches to see if perhaps there was an area removed from later maps that might indicate location of a trench burial or removal of a crater in the area as a result of filling it in - I didn't find any such feature, but am not sure how much they actively updated them as later trench maps all seemed to show EXACTLY the same layout for this area leading me to suspect they might just not have actually been updated at all.

What I did stumble on, entirely by accident, was a mosaic that was put together which covers the area, which is dated between February and March 1918. Here's the title source info:



The map just captures the edge of the area of interest (where CA40 is reported to be), which you can tell by the nearby crater patterns. What is VERY interesting to me is the feature that is circled. We know from a LOT of photos of cemeteries in the area that they used chalk to decorate the cemeteries, so seeing a white rectangular structure in the approximate area of where CA40 was reported to be (within about 50 m of the centerpoint of the map location):



Here is that same area from an airphoto we know the date of (Nov, 1917), where you can't see the structure as clearly but can see the top and bottoms of the structure as well:



I've looked and don't see this same feature present on airphotos that were taken just before the Vimy Battle (I believe they were dated April 4th, 1917) so we know this is a new 'structure' since the battle.

The shape of the structure appears to me to show two rows of graves - with the rows oriented north/south with chalk used to outline the graves, and that likely the decoration using chalk occurred sometime between the November 1917 and Feb/March 1918 airphotos. The chalk decoration we know was used extensively for cemeteries in the area as we saw in the photos of the original Zivy Crater as well as other cemeteries in the area (and I've uncovered numerous other examples online through the usual sources:





and the location is consistent with the reported location of CA40.

The questions I have now based on this and would need help answering are:

1. Can we confirm this is CA40?
2. If yes, what does this tell us? If not, what COULD it be?
3. If it was so evident after the war how could it have been missed when doing grave consolidation? Does this point to the soldiers having been moved (I thought that graves of this size were meant to be left alone and not consolidated - Zivy has only 40 soldiers I think and was left in place for example).
4. Was there any war activity around/after Feb-March 1918 that could have destroyed/alterd the surface so the cemetery could truly have been missed?
5. What about land owners? I have heard rumours after the war of farmers just wanting to get back to their stuff so hiding/destroying cemeteries/graves so they could continue operations and not have to have a cemetery on what was their property.

The airphoto mosaic does not show any numbers for the corners of this particular photo so I can't determine the exact date of the photo or photo series to get more information. I've done an extensive search of the IWM site and can't find any reference to this particular mosaic or of a collection that may house this mosaic to get potentially access to the original which might have more detail. If anyone has any leads on the source image I'm eager to see if I can get more information on it. I am not sure I can share the entire airphoto (it's too big to post and also as I purchased it on an available DVD from WFA I'm not sure I SHOULD share it as their time and efforts should be renumerated! I'm hoping sharing the snippets of the photo here are okay though - let me know if not and I'll remove them!).

Hoping this adds to the already deep investigation of this project, and eager to see what the team thinks. That this mosaic was available the entire time is surprising to me that it wasn't found earlier (unless I missed something in my read through?).

Keep up the good work and interested in your thoughts!

---

## Mystery Guest

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 2:43 pm**

Exasperating, and somewhat unbelievable (given the anonymous nature of the previous post), that the identification of any of the photos cannot be established...tickles my spider-sense.

Nevertheless, a quick and rough sketch reveals, that yes, I believe this was/is the location/**image** of Grave CA 40.

Only thing new that occurs to me is that if this is 1918, no one is going to miss CA 40 when it comes time for concentration during 1919-1923, and this only reaffirms our resolve that the men were brought into Nine Elms Military cemetery as described in our report.



P.S.: On second thought, I think am pretty sure what we are looking at is one of the major burial grounds (1st Division?), and that CA40 is actually in the crater to the upper left.

**1. Can we confirm this is CA40?**

(No.)

**2. If yes, what does this tell us? If not, what COULD it be?**

(One of the major burial grounds.)

**3. If it was so evident after the war how could it have been missed when doing grave consolidation? Does this point to the soldiers having been moved (I thought that graves of this size were meant to be left alone and not consolidated - Zivy has only 40 soldiers I think and was left in place for example).**

(Not a chance something this big was obliterated by the German Spring Offensive, and definately not, as the Germans avoided the Candians who were still in this sector at that time).

**4. Was there any war activity around/after Feb-March 1918 that could have destroyed/alterd the surface so the cemetery could truly have been missed?**

(see No. 4).

**5. What about land owners? I have heard rumours after the war of farmers just wanting to get back to their stuff so hiding/destroying cemeteries/graves so they could continue operations and not have to have a cemetery on what was their property.**

(Not applicable along the long static trench line 1914-1918...these farmers were not allowed to return until after the concentration of cemeteries).

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 3:15 pm**

If this were another cemetery what would it be? I've looked through your concentrated list of cemeteries and the only one listed in this area would be CA40.

Thanks for the answers below - didn't know that farmers weren't allowed back until the grounds were cleared - that completely removes that as a potential theory I had. Looking more to me that the soldiers would have been concentrated - but why? I think I read on here (or through details by Norm Christie on his site/video?) that cemeteries with 40 or more soldiers weren't to be concentrated and left as is.

The other question in my head would be - if they knew the names of soldiers in the graves (they were listed on the memorial that was meant to be posted at Nine Elms) and moved them, why wouldn't they name the graves or identify them? Why wouldn't they keep them together when concentrating the graves? I believe it was mentioned there were enough unknown graves to account for the men of CA40 but that they were scattered throughout and not concentrated to a single area in the cemetery?

I would LOVE to find the original airphotos used in that mosaic. As mentioned I've been looking for them for 2 weeks now through everything on the IWM online catalogue but no luck. I can't even find the original mosaic on there (even though we know the WFA found it when they scanned it in I can't find it anywhere in my search of their site). I'm hoping one of you has better luck and it can tell us more!

The mosaic is listed on the WFA DVD as the following details if that helps:

Mosaic No.34 Places:- Area North, West and East of Roelincourt  
51B A3-30, B25-26, H1-2 Date 21/03/1918 Type V  
P\_005836.jpg

Ejwalsh - As sent in private message I think you're trying to find a conspiracy where there isn't one! I've been following the chat for while but with nothing to contribute didn't bother to register - only once I came across the details in my post did I see a reason to post (and therefore have to register!).

While I've been lurking for a while here I feel I should introduce myself to the group. My name is Ryan and I've been very interested in CEF WW1 (particularly Vimy) for many years, getting interested in it after first reading the Pierre Berton book. The mystery surrounding CA40 really interests me as, given all the resources we have available, it seems it should be solvable! I was amazed when starting to look into this just HOW MUCH data is available freely and online from something that happened over 100 years ago and that those resources can potentially solve it. What I wouldn't do to be able to get over to the IWM to look through their stuff and see if we can find some additional air photos or find that mosaic!

Ryan.

---

## Rules made to be broken

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 3:42 pm**

Rules made to be broken

---

## Rules made to be broken

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 3:43 pm**

Thanks for the answers below - didn't know that farmers weren't allowed back until the grounds were cleared - that completely removes that as a potential theory I had. Looking more to me that the soldiers would have been concentrated - but why? I think I read on here (or through details by

**Norm Christie on his site/video?) that cemeteries with 40 or more soldiers weren't to be concentrated and left as is.**

What Norm Christie said is entirely applicable to cemeteries opened up during the Last Hundred Days. It's a pretty good rule-of-thumb, but there were many reasons why some did not apply.

The other question in my head would be - if they knew the names of soldiers in the graves (they were listed on the memorial that was meant to be posted at Nine Elms) and moved them, why wouldn't they name the graves or identify them? They lost the identification for the individuals by nature of the mass grave, so could not apply a name to each grave. **Why wouldn't they keep them together when concentrating the graves? I believe it was mentioned there were enough unknown graves to account for the men of CA40 but that they were scattered throughout and not concentrated to a single area in the cemetery?** From what we have learned, the men were brought in over a period of days, not all at once, and we can understand this due to the quantity of men involved and the exacting nature of the work, attempting by all means possible at the time to identify each body. The report showed the men were brought in over a period of several days and we also drew conclusions as to what those rows of the cemetery were. The 'cancelled' Memorial Cross always made us wonder why there was not a Kipling Memorial (as our report recommends now). It made sense they were planning one, because the circumstances warranted it, i.e., *"we know the identities of these men and that they are buried in this cemetery, we are just not sure about where they are buried."*

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## **Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater**

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 4:20 pm**

So we now have proof of a cemetery seen on the photos within a few metres of reported location of CA40 (it's actually just southeast of the one Norm Christie labelled in his original video - post #25 in this thread by rlaughton) that we know existed in Feb/March 1918, and know it was quite visible. As nobody would be allowed in to mess with it and there was no German shelling that could have obscured it, then I think it's entirely reasonable to conclude that CA40 was concentrated to Nine Elms (evidence of the planned memorial - and I believe based on your previous research that there's ample room there for them).

Norm Christie's hypothesis for the lost cemetery was that the cemetery was destroyed and therefore missed during the concentration of graves. Given the airphotos we see now that's not the case. The airphotos also show that CA40 was not a crater grave, as he also thought it might be, but was instead a conventional cemetery.

---

## **CA40 Overlay 6 April 1917**

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Wed Apr 03, 2019 8:43 pm**



## CA40 Overlay 6 April 1917, just before battle...



As we can see, the area suggested today is too far right of the 16th's battlefield, and we would find 14th Bn, or even maybe as far right as 15th Bn casualties in this area.  
I can sleep now.

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Thu Apr 04, 2019 7:40 am**

Thanks to Ryan for bringing this to our attention!

Interesting, I was not aware of this WFA DVD. I have the two DVDs of maps from the UKNA but these WFA maps are interesting! The UKNA version does not have the aerial photographs. Those aerals are quite different than the areas shown on the McMaster collection (51b example).

I am curious as to what the "white square" is on the photographs. If I had to hazard a guess, to me it looks like the photographs that Greg has posted for the supplies and ammunition dump at CA 39 (or maybe it was CA35?). It raises the question as to whether there are aerals that are available as "stereoscopic images"? The square appears to have both horizontal and vertical aspects.

For reference, this appears to be the details on all the maps:

Great War Map Lists

Note that you need to click the "Display #" tab in the upper right to get the full list, or specific pages.

There is an interesting page on "How to Read a Map", which I wish I had seen when I wrote my article on that topic.

The specific page for ROCLINCOURT is here:

Photo list, Arras squares 51B & 51C

The "Notes" are important, as that is what took me on a hunt for the original source - the map codes did not seem to match. There they say:

**WFA wrote:**

- The **date given is the latest for any photograph**, sometimes obtained from fine detail on a mosaic etc. Many of the photographs cover a wide date period. Some mosaics are made from photos that differ widely in date. Some have no date.
- The map references are a guide only. If a reference is given as say F 16-29, **it does not mean that all squares in that range are shown**, simply that some of the squares are visible. In others, a representative map reference is given, even if more of that is visible. Researches are advised to look at photographs nearby the area of interest in case the map references given here cause some doubt. Where these references or places are given, they have generally been taken from the handwritten notes on the reverse of each photograph. It is not known if these notes originated in the IWM or in the unit that produced the photograph.

That explains the comment "51B A3-30, B25-26, H1-2 Date 21/03/1918 Type V"

On the Roclincourt page there are a number of sources listed as "Canadian".

We would need to look at this one as well: [Mosaic No.28 Places:- NE Roclincourt, Thelus 51B A18-30, B13-26, H1-2 Date 29/01/1918 Type V], as that might show the area that we have suggested could be the burial ground, based on the CWGC directions relative to the road and light railway line.

I have no idea if this set of DVDs is still available, or if the list has grown? Main details on purchasing the DVDs is here: Mapping the Front: Great War Trench Map DVD Collection

Maybe Ryan knows the answer to that question? If not, we can ask on the GWF.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **McTague**

Posted: **Thu Apr 04, 2019 8:08 am**

Great timing! Almost 102 years ago.

Thanks to Ryan for sharing these images.

Mr. Christie's fund raising site is still active but I can't tell if there was any active digging or obtaining necessary permits last season or for this year, either?

Maybe Ryan can provide the Trench Map Coordinates for where his position is?

Just for clarity's sake; I would like to state that I feel as though CA 40 was never what one might consider a "conventional cemetery". My understanding of what CA 40 was has me believing it was a post-battle cache, supervised by burial officers and Grave Registration Units, intended only to clean



up the battleground and keep track of the dead in an official manner.

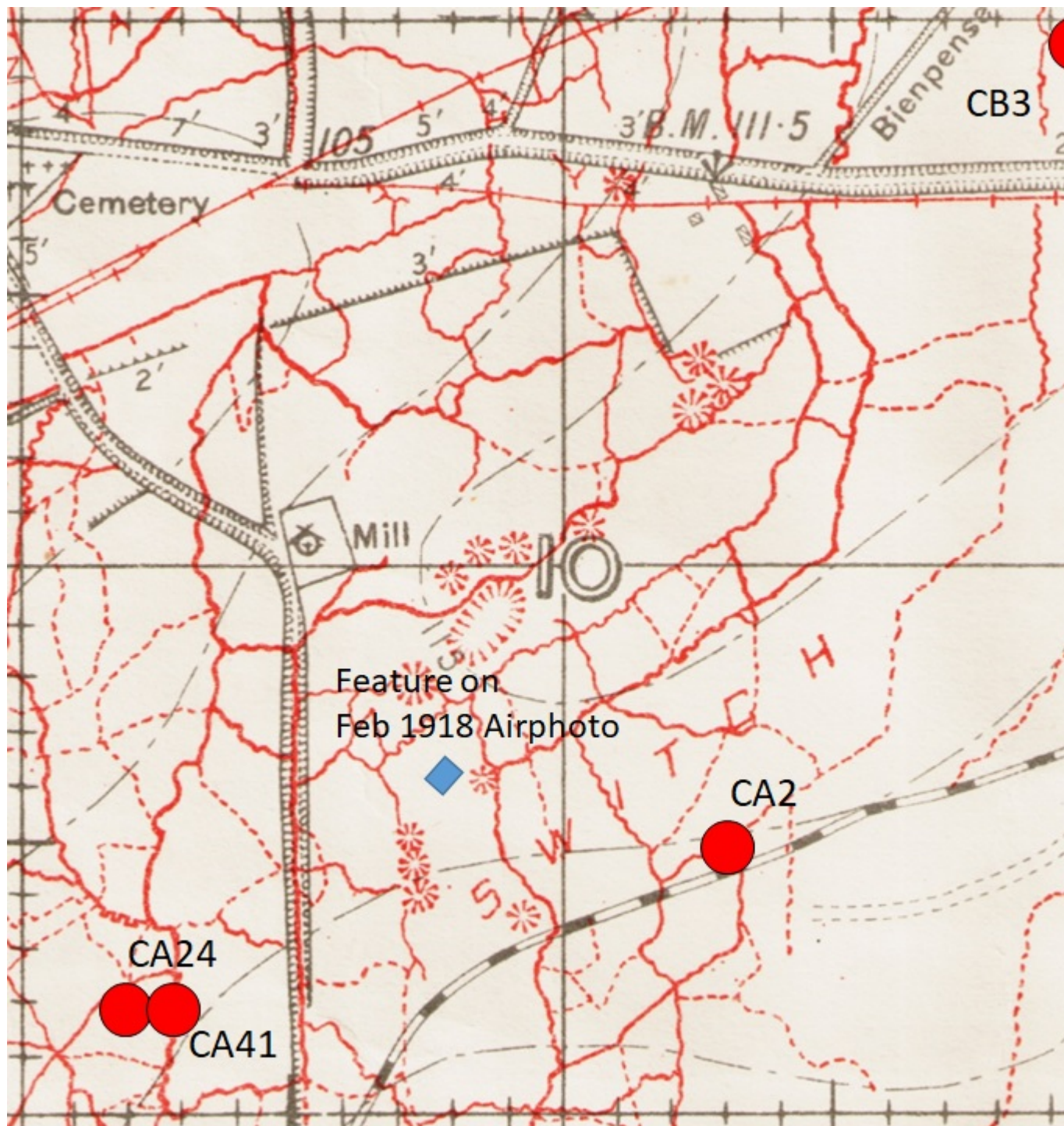
Unfortunately, anyone who wants to understand even the basics on this issue has a LOT of reading to do! OUCH!

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Thu Apr 04, 2019 11:41 am**

The location of the feature on the Feb/March 1918 airphoto, as best as I can position is at approximately 51b.a.10.c.8.6 which is very close to the reported location of CA40 (assuming the 36c=51b thing of 51b.a.10.c.9.7). I've also placed on it list of 'known' cemeteries in the area based on the COG records etc.:





RLaughton - I've got Mosaic 28 on my DVD set but can't seem to orient myself on it. Below is a smaller version of it - let me know where to focus and I'll provide an image in more detail for you.







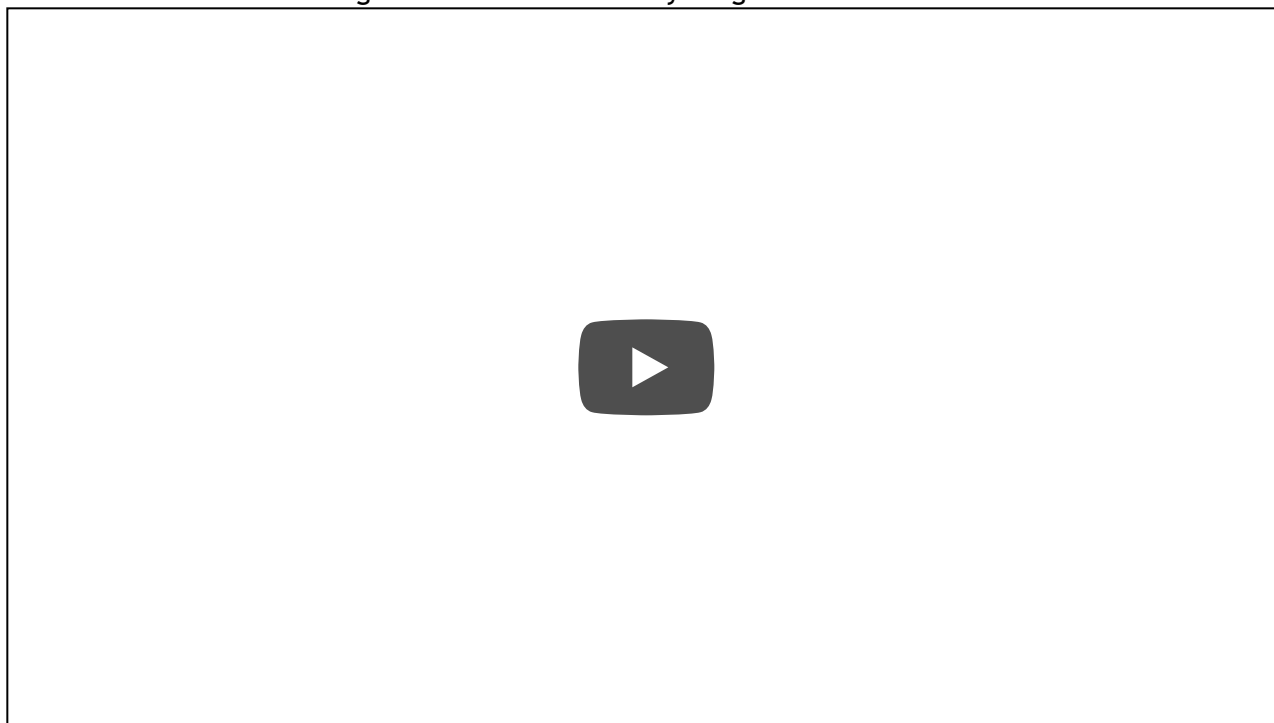
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## Battle of Vimy Ridge, 9-Apr-17

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Apr 08, 2019 8:48 am**

Voices of the men who fought in the Battle of Vimy Ridge.



Note there is one photo in this montage which requires examination in regards to the 16th Bn and CA 40.

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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Thu Apr 11, 2019 3:08 pm**

At what time is the photo you mention? The video is 25 minutes and there are a lot of photos but they all appear to be at the time of the battle or before.

---

## Light Rail

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Thu Apr 11, 2019 7:54 pm**

The light rail photos around 14:00 are particularly interesting.

Any chance of identifying the units of these men? Is this 1st Division battlefield?

New light rails on this day are significant...bringing back wounded and dying from where they fell...how close are we to CA40?

---

## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Apr 15, 2019 7:09 am**

These ones?





## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Mon Apr 15, 2019 7:50 am**

### *cefstudent wrote:*

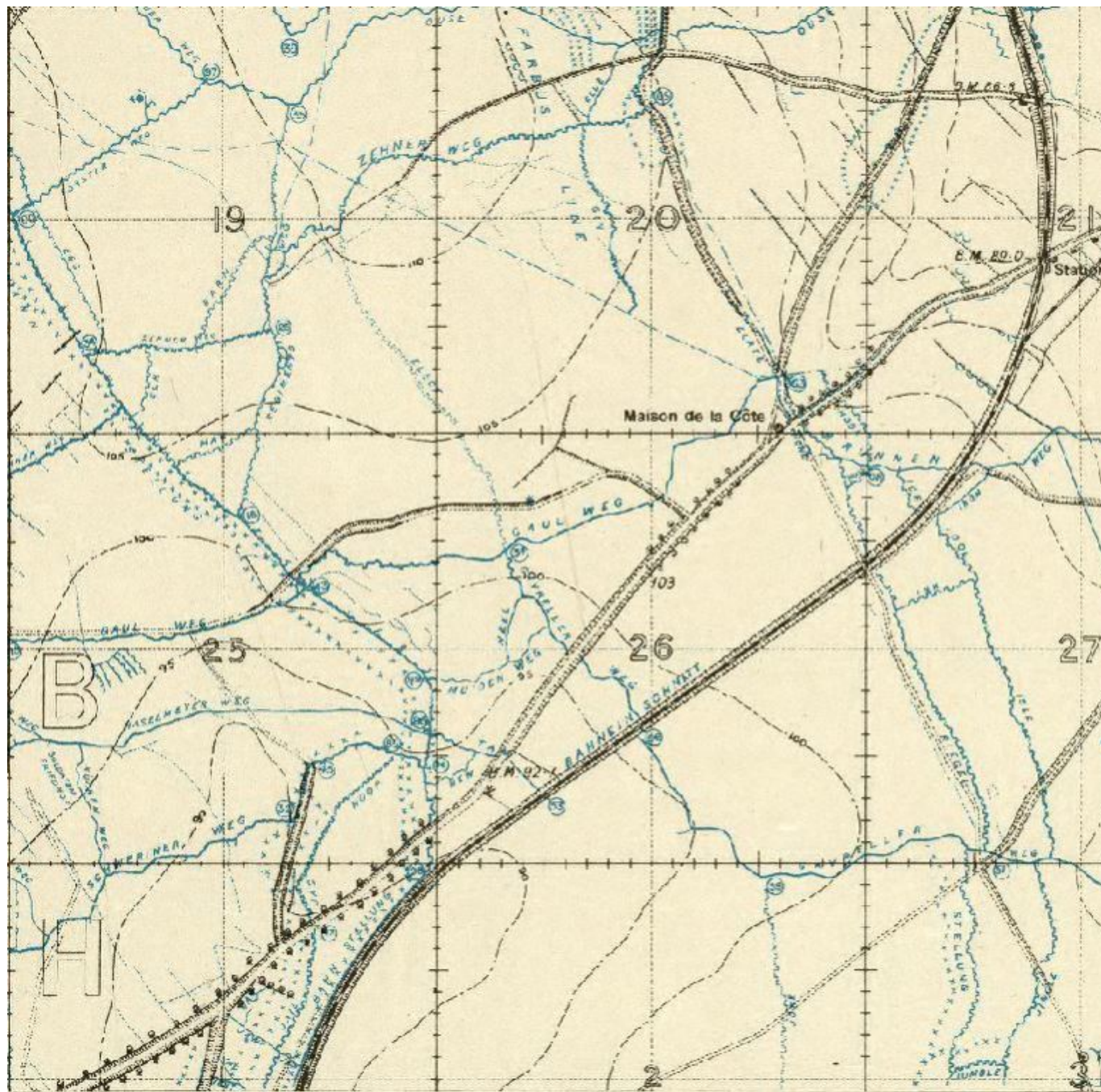
RLaughton - I've got Mosaic 28 on my DVD set but can't seem to orient myself on it. Below is a smaller version of it - let me know where to focus and I'll provide an image in more detail for you.

I looked all over the map for this the other day, thinking it was further north near Thelus. I backed off on the details and looked at 51b for signs of those main rail lines. It now appears to be a close match to the area due east of Roclincourt, west of Bailleul. All the lines appear to match, however I can find nothing with the large structure that is clear in the photo, I believe in **51b.B.20.c** central.

If I am right, the "Maison de la Cote" **51b.B.20.c.0.6** that shows on the map is just off to the right of the aerial. The bottom central location would be the "Bois de la Maison Blanche" **51b.H.1.c.3.5**.

We are looking for any aerial photographs that are in sector **51b.A.11** and **51b.A.12**.







# Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group

Dedicated to the Study of the Canadian Expeditionary Force - Financed by Donations  
<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/>

## Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

<https://cefresearch.ca/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=22&t=12680>

### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

Page **30** of **30**

by **ejwalshe**

Posted: **Mon Apr 15, 2019 9:44 am**

Yes, Richard.....those are the photos that caught my interest.

I was somewhat skeptical of the official photographer being so close to the front....back near Bailleul is more plausible.

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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Wed Apr 17, 2019 5:41 pm**

Yes the airphoto doesn't appear to extend far enough north - it just touches the 18 square it seems in my matching the photo with airphotos from the McMaster Library which which show the light rail line observed coming off the main rail line.

I have some airphotos from November 1918 and cropped to the squares you asked for. Let me know if you want more detail of an area (as you can see was a slightly cloudy day when taken!):



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### Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **cefstudent**

Posted: **Wed Apr 17, 2019 6:02 pm**

I just tried to see if I could see any of the 'known' cemeteries in the area on the airphoto above and the original. While there are meant to be several cemeteries in the area I can't identify one of them from the airphoto (even though they should be present by that point in time and I don't think concentrated yet) - we 'know' they are there, so not seeing them on the airphoto doesn't mean it's not there.

Cemeteries in area:

CA6 - 51b.a.11.d.2.3

CA37 - 51b.a.11.c.9.1

CA39 - 51b.a.11.c.3.0 (24 burials)

CB10 - 51b.a.11.a.7.6

CB10 is interesting - as there are 2 notes of mass concentrations from this coordinate.

One has 8 soldiers killed in May 1917 with members of the 25th, 21st, 18th, 28th, 31st

One has 39 soldiers with killed dates of April 9, 1917 - with members of 16th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 25th.

I don't see any cemeteries listed in 51b.a.12 based on the concentration records for the area (from Arras Road, CC#2, Lieven, Nine Elms - are there other concentration records I should look at?)

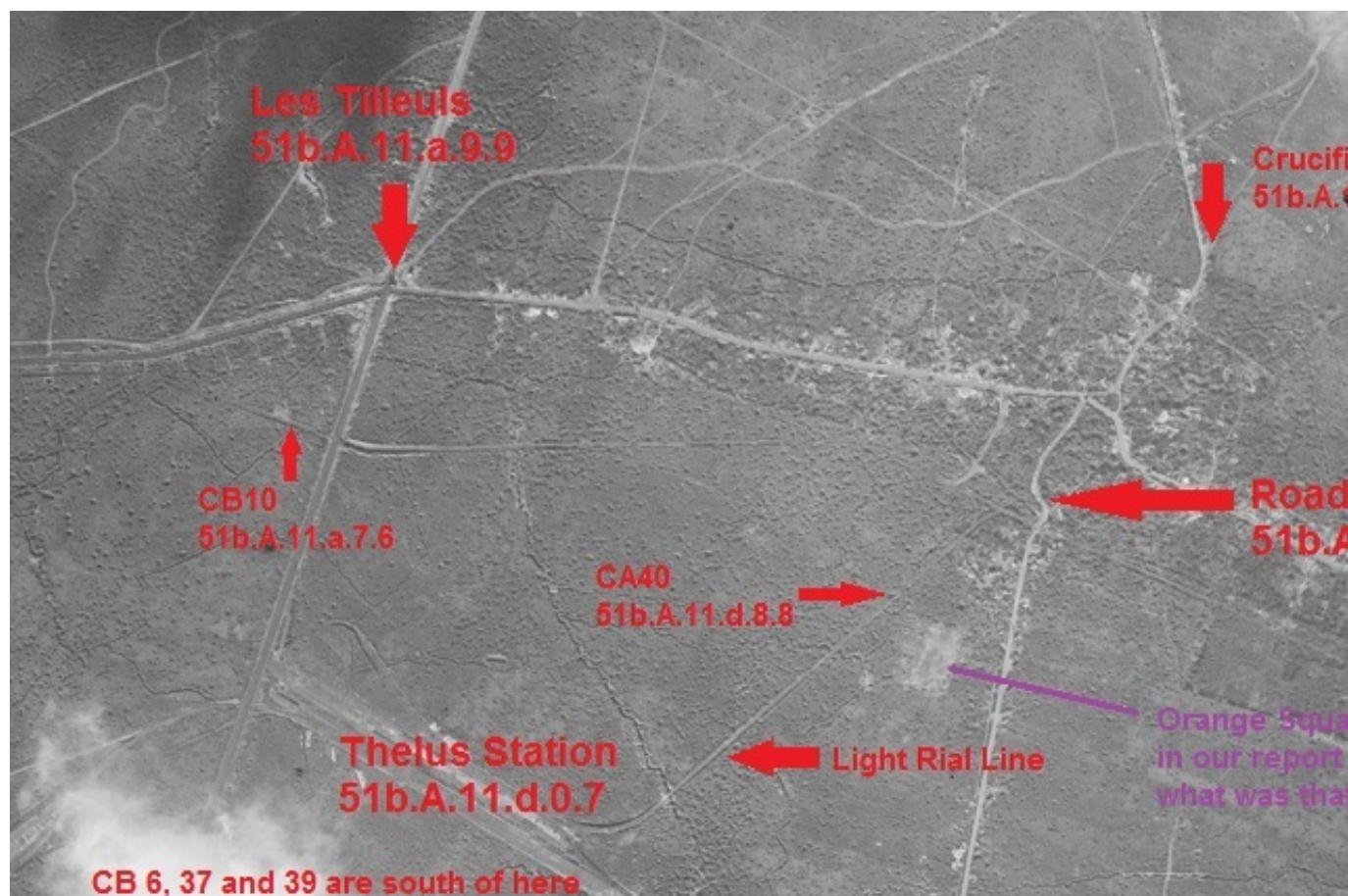
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## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by rlaughton

Posted: Fri Apr 19, 2019 3:28 pm

I think all but CA10 are below this image. Here is my take on that image:



## Re: Vimy Ridge: Norm Christie and Nine Elms C.A.40 Crater

by **rlaughton**

Posted: **Sat Mar 07, 2020 4:29 pm**

I was looking for something completely different this afternoon while going through the UKNA trench maps on DVD#2. I happened to see that WO-297-4426 for the First Army Front showed a number of craters near Thelus that I did not know existed. It is not exactly where we thought the CWGC described CA40 might exist at **51b.A.11.d.8.8** but they are in the same area. It may not be significant but clearly it shows there are things that are yet unknown.

Perhaps my memory has faded and we did see these on the aerial photographs and I have forgotten?

I thought they might be ones that were created post-Vimy but it would appear the map is stamped 23 February 1917.

They are craters, as I checked the ones we knew about in **51b.A.10** and those are in agreement.

We never did hear a peep from the CWGC as a result of either of our two reports submitted. At best they just ignored them, did not even acknowledge them. I have asked a few times but perhaps now that the centennial is over it would be a good time to "shake the tree"!

